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IN MEMORIAM PAUL DEMIÉVILLE (1895-1979)

Paul Demiéville, décédé à Paris, le 23 mars 1979, à l'âge de 84 ans, lança, sous la direction de Sylvain Levi, et de Takakusu Junjirō, professeur à l'Université de Tōkyō, la première grande entreprise de collaboration culturelle et scientifique franco-japonaise de la Maison Franco-Japonaise: le *Hōbōgirin*, dictionnaire explicatif en langue française de la terminologie bouddhique sino-japonaise. Son séjour au Japon s'étendit de 1926 à 1931. Il revint au Japon pour quelques mois en 1966 et dirigea jusqu'à sa mort le *Hōbōgirin* dont le Fascicule Annexe "Répertoire du Canon Bouddhique" sortit de presse en décembre 1978 et dont le Fascicule V, à paraître cet été, fit encore l'objet de ses dernières révisions.

En ce qui concerne son oeuvre bouddhique, je rappellerai d'abord quelles furent les principales orientations de ses recherches:

1. le bouddhisme indien, et particulièrement la tradition Vijñānavāda, d'après les traductions et les sources chinoises,
2. les origines du Tch'an,
3. l'inventaire culturel de l'oasis de Touen houang.

Ses maîtres furent le sinologue Edouard Chavannes, mort prématurément, et l'indianiste Sylvain Lévi, qui exerça une véritable hégémonie sur les études extrême-orientales durant les années 1920-30. P. Demiéville entra à l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient et se chargea d'abord de travaux où l'on sent la marque de Sylvain Lévi.

I. *Les versions chinoises du Milindapañha*. Travail amorcé par Specht et Pelliot, oeuvre au confluent de deux cultures, la grecque représentée par le roi indo-grec Ménandre, successeur d'Alexandre, et l'indienne, représentée par le Bhikkhu Nāgasena. Dans sa version en pāli, plutôt qu'une oeuvre représentative d'une doctrine en voie de formation, comme les aimera plus tard P. Demiéville, il s'agit plutôt d'un témoignage sur le Petit Véhicule pleinement élaboré. Dans sa version chinoise, on peut déceler cependant des embryons de Grand Véhicule.

D'un point de vue de critique externe, il situe d'abord l'oeuvre en tant que traduction chinoise. Le type de présentation qu'il adopte servira de modèle à toutes les monographies publiées encore aujourd'hui sur des traductions canoniques en chinois.

En outre, pour mettre les choses au point (car il aime toujours assumer une responsabilité totalement) il donne en appendice la première description complète et critique du Canon chinois, description où il étudie pour la première fois en langue occidentale de nombreux sujets, notamment les éditions coréennes, description qu'il complètera et affinera tout au long de sa vie.

Pour la critique interne, il fait preuve dans ses notes énormes et dans ses appendices d'une rigueur et d'une ampleur d'information qui est d'autant plus frappante qu'il disposait à l'époque d'infiniment moins d'outils: index, concordances, etc. qu'à présent.

Dans cet ouvrage où l'indianisme est assumé loyalement, on constate déjà un changement de perspective par rapport à Sylvain Lévi: la balance penche en faveur de la sinologie. P. Demiéville continuera cependant à faire d'excellentes études sur le bouddhisme purement indien. Je pense en particulier à son extraordinaire compte-rendu, presque aussi long que le livre lui-même, sur le Concile de Vaiśālī de Marcel Hofinger. Cette alternance entre perspective plutôt chinoise ou plutôt indienne constituera un des caractères les plus féconds du *Hōbōgirin*.

II. *Le Hōbōgirin*. Après ce magnifique travail sur le *Milindapañha*, qui fut un peu pour lui ce qu'il appelait, quand il lisait nos premiers travaux, "faire ses gammes", P. Demiéville était mûr pour le *Hōbōgirin*, project cher à Sylvain Lévi qui avait un double objectif: faire connaître aux Indianistes, qui, dans l'ensemble ne connaissaient ni le chinois, ni le japonais, d'une part, la prodigieuse expansion du bouddhisme et par le fait même de l'"Inde civilisatrice" en Extrême-Orient, et, d'autre part, l'apport scientifique du Japon moderne dans ce domaine d'étude: résultat des recherches japonaises, moyens de travail élaborés au Japon. Nous verrons, surtout à partir du II^e Fascicule, P. Demiéville s'émanciper des consignes trop sommaires et trop exclusivement indianistes de S. Lévi. Les articles prennent de plus en plus d'ampleur et la vision se fait de plus en plus souple. Aux articles où la Chine et le Japon

apparaissent comme le prolongement de l'Inde, selon la vision de S. Lévi, font pendant des articles sinologiques où l'étude de la greffe indienne éclaire surtout l'origine d'un phénomène d'acculturation. Cette oscillation Inde/Chine continue à marquer le *Hōbōgin*.

III. *Diverses études sur le Vijñānavāda*. Je crois que c'est aussi sous l'influence de Sylvain Lévi que, dans le bouddhisme indien, P. Demiéville sera particulièrement attiré par la tendance idéaliste Yogācāra. On a décrit S. Lévi comme tournant toute sa vie autour de l'oeuvre authentique ou apocryphe d'Āśvaghoṣa. P. Demiéville, par plusieurs publications, participe à cette investigation à une époque où l'épistémologie et la psychologie Vijñānavādin suscitent dans le sillage de S. Lévi de nombreuses études par La Vallée Poussin, Stcherbatsky, Yamaguchi, Lamotte.

Tout au long de son activité, P. Demiéville, dont les intérêts sont multiples mais ont aussi la caractéristique d'être constants, produira des études sur le Yogācāra et orientera divers travaux dans cette voie.

Il sera attiré par l'énorme Yogācārabhūmi qu'on peut attribuer à Asaṅga. Avant d'aborder cette somme, il éclaircira le chemin et publiera une étude importante sur la Yogācārabhūmi de Saṃgharakṣa, prototype sommaire de celle d'Asaṅga. La Yogācārabhūmi, qui avait fasciné Hiuan-tsang restera cependant la seule grande somme de la philosophie bouddhique indienne (si j'excepte la démesurée Mahāvibhāṣā) à rester non traduite en langue occidentale. C'est à présent à partir surtout du versant tibétain que Lambert Schmithausen, de Hambourg, monte à l'assaut de cet ouvrage très difficile et qui a exercé une influence considérable sur la philosophie du bouddhisme chinois à partir des T'ang.

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Tout en accomplissant ces travaux où le bouddhisme indien tient la part du lion, P. Demiéville manifesta un intérêt de plus en plus vif pour un courant bouddhique spécifiquement chinois, fort teinté de Taoisme philosophique: le Tch'an.

Sans doute faut-il faire remonter cet intérêt à la lecture de son ami Hou Che qui fut un prodigieux stimulateur de la renaissance des études chinoises en Chine durant les années 1920-30, (Ce fut aussi, semble-t-il, une publication de Hou Che qui l'introduisit au philosophe de l'histoire du XVIII^e siècle, Chang Hiue-cheng, le "Vico chinois", qui fut pour P. Demiéville un "ami" de cinquante ans).

Son goût pour le Tch'an se développa pendant son séjour au Japon. Pouvait-il prévoir l'immense engouement qu'allait susciter en Occident quelques lustres plus tard le Zen japonais?

Il faut certainement tenir compte dans cet attrait de l'extrême importance qu'ont eu dans la vie intérieure de P. Demiéville la poésie et les arts plastiques, domaine où le Tch'an a fait passer un "frisson nouveau". A propos de la culture et de la sensibilité artistique de P. Demiéville, je devrais aussi mentionner la place que jouait la musique dans sa vie, plusieurs études (notamment dans le *Hōbōgin*) qui font autorité dans le domaine de la musicologie orientale, son amitié pour Stravinsky, sa passion jusqu'à la fin pour la musique indienne et le flamenco arabisé.

Enfin, il faut tenir compte du côté primesautier de son caractère. P. Demiéville ne détestait rien tant que de "se prendre au sérieux" ou d'être "pompier". Assurément, la mise en question générale prônée par le Tch'an plaisait à son tempérament amateur de paradoxe et à sa modestie que parfois on pouvait presque trouver aggressive.

Ses études sur le Tch'an ont été d'une certaine manière encouragées par les charges écrasantes qui l'attendaient à son retour à Paris en 1931. Non seulement il fallait continuer le *Hōbōgin*, mais il fallait aussi inventorier les manuscrits de Touen houang, le trésor que Paul Pelliot avait confié à la Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris: une sélection très abondante parmi une masse de manuscrits s'échelonnant du V^e au X^e siècle, Trouvés dans une grotte d'une petite ville de frontière chinoise qui avait eu la destinée d'être la principale plaque tournante entre la Chine et les pays "occidentaux", c'est-à-dire le Tibet, les tribus turques et les cités iranisées de l'Asie Centrale. Les documents concernant le Tch'an y tenaient, comme nous le verrons, une place importante. En outre, son enseignement purement sinologique lui permettait de commencer, comme il l'aimait,

par le commencement: l'étude de Tchouang-tseu, qui fut aussi une de ses passions jusqu'à ses derniers jours, pavait le chemin pour une étude en profondeur du Tch'an.

Après avoir étudié l'assimilation du bouddhisme indien dans la langue et dans la culture chinoises, P. Demiéville, avec les documents de Touen houang se trouve devant un nouveau phénomène d'adaptation, cette fois en sens inverse. C'est maintenant la Chine qui essaye de s'imposer aux "Barbares de l'Ouest", quoique dans certains cas, nous voyons aussi les "occidentaux" influencer la Chine.

C'est dans la ligne de sa sympathie pour le Tch'an et dans son sentiment de responsabilité vis-à-vis des documents de Touen houang qu'il faut voir le principal ouvrage d'érudition qui paraîtra sous son nom: *le Concile de Lhasa, I*, paru en 1952.

Il s'agit d'un ouvrage fait en plusieurs temps: avant, durant, après la guerre. Un index très soigneusement fait permet de s'y retrouver, car on se trouve confronté à la fois à des textes doctrinaux, un commentaire historique, des notes interminables, des additions en trois couches ... une profusion de renseignements totalement originaux, toujours exprimés dans une langue d'une admirable clarté, familière parfois et humoristique, sans le moindre laisser-aller, toujours personnelle. L'immense culture, orientale et occidentale, de l'auteur lui permet des rapprochements d'autant plus frappants qu'ils sont prudents. L'expérience concomitante de la guerre, de la décolonisation, se manifeste au fil des pages avec un caractère d'autant plus décisif qu'il est discret. La défaite définitive au Tibet d'une version chinoise du bouddhisme, c'est-à-dire du Tch'an subitiste, taxé de quiétisme, face au bouddhisme, indien, gradualiste, scolastique et pédant est un événement peu connu de l'histoire, mais c'est un événement très symptomatique que nous voyons P. Demiéville traiter sous toutes ses faces. Sa vision est totale: à côté des développements doctrinaux et de la description historique (l'infériorité momentanée de la Chine de la fin des T'ang devant le jeune impérialisme tibétain), il en envisage l'impact culturel, psychologique, social. Il touche parfois aux affinités entre les doctrines confrontées et d'autres systèmes et, en perspective très discrètement esquissée, aux conséquences des faits étudiés pour l'Extrême-Orient actuel, dont P. Demiéville ne s'est jamais désintéressé.

De ces années d'après-guerre, où il publia son gros ouvrage sur le Concile de Lhasa, datent aussi quelques uns des plus admirables articles courts de P. Demiéville. Je pense en particulier à son étude d'une puissante information, notamment dans les sources patristiques chrétiennes, et d'une intense poésie sur le "Miroir spirituel". Je pense aussi à son bel aperçu sur le Bouddhisme et la guerre en post-face à l'étude de Georges Renondeau sur les Moines guerriers du Japon.

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Après le Concile de Lhasa, nous verrons l'activité bouddhique de P. Demiéville se poursuivre sur les trois voies que nous avons signalées au début. L'intérêt pour le bouddhisme indien se maintient, toujours centré sur le Yogācārabhūmiśāstra. La "Touenhouangologie" prend un grand développement dont nous signalerons trois aspects. Il consacre l'un de ses cours au Collège de France aux Pien wen de Touen houang, textes narratifs et théâtraux qui sont les ancêtres du roman (une autre de ses passions) et du théâtre chinois. Il publie périodiquement d'excellentes mises au point bibliographiques sur les travaux en particulier chinois, japonais et russes sur Touen houang. Le dernier de ces panoramas a été terminé en octobre dernier. Il sera publié dans le volume actuellement sous presse à Seoul dont la publication coïncidera avec le "Colloque international sur les Manuscrits de Haute Asie" qui aura lieu à Paris en octobre 1979 à l'occasion du centenaire de Paul Pelliot. Enfin et surtout, il publie avec un Professeur de Hong-kong, Jao Tsong-yi un grand recueil de poèmes chantés, intitulé "*Airs de Touen houang*", et, avec le même Jao Tsong-yi et un savant belge, professeur à Canberra, Pierre Ryckmans, bien connu aussi sous le nom de Simon Leys, un recueil de *peintures monochromes de Touen houang*, deux ouvrages qui reflètent aussi son goût pour la poésie, la musique et la peinture.

La troisième voie, celle du Tch'an, il continue d'abord à la pratiquer durant le second de ses cours au Collège de France, dont le thème principal est soit la genèse du Tch'an, soit la poésie chinoise. Dans la poésie chinoise, dont il a édité la meilleure anthologie, il est particulièrement attiré par un poète qui fut aussi un théoricien

bouddhique, qu'il semble malheureusement n'avoir pas eu le temps d'étudier sous ce dernier aspect, Sie Ling-yun, figure, comme il les aime, un peu antérieure à l'âge d'or de la poésie classique chinoise, poète montagnard aussi. La montagne, dont il a parlé admirablement dans un article de France-Asie, jouait un grand rôle dans la personnalité si riche de P. Demiéville, Suisse d'origine et alpiniste. J'y vois certainement une clé de l'attraction qu'il avait jusqu'à la fin de sa vie pour le Ladakh himalayen et aussi pour la tradition indigéniste andine de l'Amérique latine. C'est dans la voie du Tch'an qu'il publia à la fin de sa vie son livre le plus accessible au grand public et qui est une admirable traduction d'un texte difficile mais, comme il aurait dit, "percutant": les *Entretiens de Lin-tsi*, dans la collection des "Documents spirituels" d'Arthème Fayard. Ces paroles d'un des plus remarquables représentants du Tch'an chinois répondaient au besoin de substance, de profondeur, de "solide" qu'éprouvait P. Demiéville et en même temps à son horreur pour tout ce qui était figé, auto-satisfait.

J'espère que cette esquisse du portrait d'un savant et d'un humaniste d'après son oeuvre bouddhique ne sera pas trop déconcertant pour ceux qui ne l'ont pas connu. Avec un Demiéville, on aurait pu faire quatre ou cinq savants de grande envergure. En outre, il avait une puissance de concentration et une rapidité d'exécution qui nous donnait l'impression, à nous tâcherons, qu'il pouvait faire en quelques instants ce qui nous demandait des heures de travail. Mais il faut encore parler de sa générosité. Si son oeuvre, beaucoup plus abondante qu'elle ne paraît, n'est pas réductible à quelques grands livres bien déterminés, c'est parce qu'il s'est prodigué pour autrui. A ses étudiants, il donnait beaucoup de temps et de travail. Bien des ouvrages, dans le monde entier, portent la trace d'une véritable collaboration de P. Demiéville. Il s'est dévoué à la publication des oeuvres posthumes de ses prédécesseurs et amis, P. Pelliot et surtout Henri Maspéro. Nous savons l'immense part qu'il a assumée dans le *Hōbōgirin*, mais il donnait également beaucoup à d'autres travaux collectifs: Encyclopédie de la Pléiade, *Civiltà dell'Oriente*, etc. ainsi qu'à des périodiques: *Bibliographie Bouddhique*, *Revue Bibliographique de Sinologie*, *T'oung Pao*, dont il assumait longtemps la direction. C'est là que vient de paraître son dernier compte-rendu, seize pages débordantes d'informations pui-

sées à la source et de vivacité juvénile, consacrées au livre de notre collègue du Hōbōgirin, Antonino Forte, sur la politique bouddhique de l'impératrice Wou Tsō-tien.

Il restera l'image du grand philologue, dans la tradition du XIX^e siècle, où il était né, du respect et de l'exploitation en profondeur des sources, doublé d'un humaniste plus attiré (est-ce une marque du XX^e siècle?) par tout ce qui se cherchait au confluent de plusieurs cultures, de plusieurs époques, que par les systèmes arrivés à leur apogée. En outre, ce restera pour nous une chance merveilleuse que cet homme qui avait des affinités électives avec tant de domaines se soit résolu de consacrer aux études bouddhiques une grande part de son énergie et de ses dons.

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TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF THE ICONOGRAPHY OF SABAZIUS*

EUGENE N. LANE

I. *Introduction: Unquestioned Sabazius-Representations*

In the course of my doing preliminary work for a corpus of the epigraphical material for the cult of Sabazius, to appear in a future volume of the *Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain*, it has become almost painfully evident to me that there exists no generally accepted standard for the recognition of this god in art, and that the most extremely variable iconographic types have in the course of the last fifty or so years been taken as representing this divinity, sometimes with little or no apparent justification. It seems to me therefore an indispensable preliminary step, if we are ever to construct a meaningful corpus of this material, to determine rather rigorously what is to be included and what excluded. We must try to determine what kind of a representation the artisan would have used the word "Sabazius" for when he was making it, and the average ancient observer would have designated "Sabazius" when he saw it.

Now in defining the iconography of this divinity, attested from the comedies of Aristophanes to the end of Greco-Roman paganism, there are two sure groups of monuments which can serve as our guide. The first group consists of inscribed reliefs which include both a picture of Sabazius and his name. There are to date, unfortunately, only six items to be discussed in this category, and two of these (nos. 4 and 6 below), as we shall see, are of questionable value.

1) A relief from Blandos, present-day Balat, in Mysia.¹ The relief, accompanied by the inscription

Μένανδρος Ἀθηνοδώ-
ρου Διὶ Σααξίω
εὐχὴν

(surely Sabazius, in spite of idiosyncrasies of spelling), shows the

god seated on a throne, holding a spear in his left hand and making a libation from a patera which he holds in his right. We also observe an altar, a tree with a snake twisted around it, and two votaries. The god wears a long gown, and if the drawing which we possess of this relief is to be trusted, he is beardless.

2) A relief now in the British Museum, of unknown provenience in Asia Minor.² With the inscription

Εὐτυχος Δὶ Σαβαζείῳ
κατ' ὄνιον χαριστήριον,

it shows Sabazius on horseback with chlamys and chiton, leggings and boots, bareheaded except for a diadem. He is holding a thunderbolt in his right hand and two spears in his left. On one side of the relief there is a tree, around which a snake is wound and on one branch of which an eagle sits. At the base of the tree are an altar and a crater.

3) A much-discussed relief from Koloe in Lydia.³ The long inscription commemorates the *καθιέρωσις* (introduction of cult?) of Zeus Sabazios in 101 A.D. Here Sabazius is shown in a chariot, bearded. Above the two horses which draw the chariot is an eagle, below them a snake. Behind the horses there is an accompanying figure, probably intended for Hermes, holding a caduceus, and near him, there is a crescent moon. Perhaps also to be interpreted as Sabazius is a bearded figure, standing at an altar, and making a libation. Both the sure and the hypothetical Sabazius-figures are heavily draped. To be singled out in the lower register of the relief is an altar with a tree behind it, amid a group of votaries.

So far, on the basis of this group of examples from Asia Minor we can summarize as follows: Sabazius can be shown seated, on horseback, or in a chariot. A spear or scepter is twice an attribute, but also there are single occurrences of a patera, a thunderbolt, and a crater. On all three reliefs, an altar appears in the vicinity of the god, as does a tree, twice entwined by a snake. In all three cases a snake is somewhere present, and in two an eagle. Once a Hermes-figure accompanies Sabazius, and once there is a suggestion of lunar associations. The eagle and the snake, of course, do not mean much as they are among the most banal of animals in ancient religious iconography, but the combination of the two is not so

banal as they are separately. The tree, and particularly the fact that the snake is often around the tree, are more noteworthy.

4) Let us go on to the other representations. We have an inscribed relief from the Lydian Philadelphia, present Alaşehir, showing a standing, bearded man, pouring liquid from a patera into a crater.⁴ Although there can be no certainty as to whether Sabazius or a votary is intended, the tree behind the crater helps bring this piece into line with previously considered representations. The inscription

Διὶ Κορυφαίῳ Δία Σα-
ουάξιον Νεαυλίτην
Πλουτίων Πλουτίωνος
Μαίων εὐχὴν

is interesting both in that it shows Sabazius with a local epithet, and the votive dedication of a statue of him to another form of Zeus.

5) Although unquestionably intended for a representation of the god, a silverfoil plaque from Vichy, France (ancient Aquae Calidae) is aberrant in iconography from those previously discussed.⁵ It shows a standing Jupiter, draped only from the waist down, holding in his left hand a staff or scepter, and in his right a thunderbolt. At his feet is an eagle. The plaque itself is in basic tree-shape, and was found with other similar, but non-inscribed plaques, probably also intended to represent Sabazius. At the foot of the plaque (which was found in the same context with a coin of Gordian III) is the inscription:

Numin. Aug. Deo Iovi Sa-
basio G. Iul. Caras-
sounus V.S.L.M.

Although the staff or scepter is similar to the spear which Sabazius carries on the reliefs previously discussed, and the thunderbolt is similar to the one carried by the equestrian Sabazius (no. 2 above), and the eagle occurred on two of the first three items discussed, all of these attributes are clearly banal and point merely to the fact that Sabazius is being identified with Zeus, as indeed he is in all inscriptions so far mentioned. Conspicuously absent is the snake (not by any means Sabazius' exclusive property, but not

generally associated with Zeus either in imperial times), especially the snake-entwined tree, although the basic tree-form of the plaque may express much the same idea. Different, also, is the fact that Sabazius is here not totally clothed, but in more typically Zeus-like semi-nudity. The conclusion can hardly be escaped that at this western outpost of Sabazius-cult, the artisan had no defined Sabazius-iconography to work with, and simply pressed undistinguished Zeus-iconography into service for his Sabazius-worshipping customers.

6) Finally in this group, we mention a now-lost monument from Rome.⁶ It is a small four-sided altar, with very low relief work. Three of the sides display respectively Artemis, Apollo, and a water bird. The fourth is described as showing Sabazius in a long gown, walking on his toes, holding in his left hand a thyrsus-like spear, decorated with ribbons, his right hand on his head. Flanking him are a cypress and a pine-tree. There is no snake present.

Underneath the side which depicts Artemis is the inscription:

Πάρος Σαβαζί-
ω δῶρον.

The description of the side that ostensibly portrays Sabazius is certainly unusual, from an iconographical point of view, as it seems to describe someone in a Dionysiac frenzy, and thus to underline the at least alleged Dionysiac connections of the god, to be discussed in greater detail later. But does it in fact portray Sabazius? There is no rule that a votive gift to a god must portray that god, and certainly no one would presume to give the name Sabazius to the iconographically well-defined Artemis, or to Apollo, to say nothing of the bird. Yet if Sabazius were to appear on a monument dedicated to him, one would expect him to be on the same side as the dedicatory inscription which includes his name, not in a subordinate position. My hunch is that we are no dealing with a Sabazius-representation here at all, but with a fairly trivial representation of Dionysus.

The second group of monuments which give us reliable information about the iconography of Sabazius are the figurines of the god either still or formerly attached to the votive hands which are so characteristic of this cult. Now of the votive hands which can be

dedicated to a variety of divinities (including also Jupiter Dolichenus and Heliopolitanus) it has been established since C. Blinkenberg's *Archäologische Studien* (Copenhagen, 1904) that those which have the hand in the position of the "benedictio Latina" are to be connected with Sabazius. The connection is made explicit by the existence of three such hands specifically dedicated to Sabazius. One is without attributes, and is now in the collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.⁷ It bears the inscription:

Ἀθηναῖς (or Ἀθηναῖ(ο)ς)
ἀνάθεμα
Διὶ Σαβαζί-
ω.

The second, which is covered with the usual attributes (see discussion below), is now in the British Museum.⁸ It bears the inscription:

Ζουγόρας εὐξά-
μενος ἀνέθη-
κεν Σαβαζί-
[ω.....]

The last, which like the first is without attributes, is from Vado in Liguria, and is now in the British Museum also.^{8a} It bears the inscription:

Ἀριστοκλῆς
ἐπιστατεύσα[ς]
Δι[ὶ] Σαβαζίω.

Blinkenberg knew of 50 of these hands, including 4 questionable reports, and I have come across 21 that either were unknown to Blinkenberg or have subsequently been discovered. I append a list in the footnote.⁹

There can be no denying that the attributes which clutter these hands are also relevant to the iconography of the god. But it would be going far beyond the scope of this paper to attempt an analysis of the iconography of all the recently discovered items. Some of them are inadequately published, and even when publication is good, the state of preservation or the original artisan's ineptitude often makes identification of the attributes difficult. I consequently reproduce

Blinkenberg's tabulation of attributes below, with the remark that subsequent discoveries have not produced any significant alterations in the overall picture.

Pine-cone(s)	appear(s) on	24	of	30	hands	with	attributes
Snake(s)	„	„	29	„	„	„	„
Lizard	„	„	26	„	„	„	„
Frog	„	„	25	„	„	„	„
Turtle	„	„	28	„	„	„	„
Eagle and thunderbolt	„	„	7	„	„	„	„
Crater or like	„	„	19	„	„	„	„
Double flute	„	„	13	„	„	„	„
Ram's Head	„	„	16	„	„	„	„
Offering table	„	„	7	„	„	„	„
Sacrificial knife	„	„	4	„	„	„	„
Sacrificial cakes	„	„	6	„	„	„	„
Tree-branch	„	„	11	„	„	„	„
Scales	„	„	11	„	„	„	„
Cymbals	„	„	7	„	„	„	„
Thyrsus	„	„	4	„	„	„	„
Sabazius-bust	„	„	6	„	„	„	„
Hermes-bust	„	„	5	„	„	„	„
Mother-and-child	„	„	11	„	„	„	„
Bird behind mother	„	„	5	„	„	„	„
Whip	„	„	7	„	„	„	„
Small vessel(s)	„	„	6	„	„	„	„

Some of these, such as the pine-cone, are widespread symbols of divinity, fertility, or immortality; others are so-called "apotropaic" animals or animals especially associated with Sabazius; others cult-implements, or noise-makers which must have accompanied the liturgies; while others yet serve to associate Sabazius with other divinities or give the reason for the vow.¹⁰

When we turn from the hands to the actual statuettes of the god which adorn them or formerly were attached to them, we find that there are five hands which still bear such statues:

1) One is from Vado, Liguria, present location unknown.¹¹ It is different from the others to be discussed, in that the figure of Sabazius is cast in the same piece as the hand. It contains, of the common attributes listed by Blinkenberg, all but the eagle and thunderbolt, cymbals, Sabazius-bust (expectably, if it has a Sabazius-statue), and Hermes-bust. It does, however, have a cypress, tongs, a vessel, and one unclear object. The figure of the god has a long gown, boots, and a Phrygian cap. His hands are

outstretched, rather than uplifted, but appear from the photograph to be in an attitude of blessing, anyhow.

2) This is a hand from Herculaneum, now in the Naples Museum.¹² Of Blinkenberg's list of common attributes, this hand contains all but the sacrificial knife, thyrsus, Sabazius-bust, Hermes-bust, bird behind mother, and small vessel. It has one unidentifiable object, a four-part flower, and a small statuette of Sabazius, cast in one piece with the ram's head on which he places his feet. The god is dressed in Phrygian cap, sleeved tunic reaching to the knees, leggings, and boots. The two hands are raised in the same attitude of blessing which characterizes the votive hand itself.

3) This is a hand from the St. Louis City Art Museum.¹³ It is so similar to the Herculaneum hand just discussed that it seems safe to assume that it is a product of the same workshop. However, it is better preserved at the top, and clearly shows a thunderbolt surmounted by an eagle, on whose shoulder there is a small bust, perhaps intended to represent to worshipper borne heavenwards. The Sabazius-figure exactly resembles that on the Herculaneum hand. The hand itself is missing all the same things which the Herculaneum hand is missing from the standard list, but adds, *inter alia*, a grasshopper, a beetle (?), and an object which resembles a rabbit wrapped like a mummy.

4) and 5) Lastly, among the hands which have preserved Sabazius-statuettes on them are the two from Pompeii.¹⁴ The statuettes are very similar to the two preceding, but one of them shows lunar syncretism in that it has a crescent atop Sabazius' head. As for the attributes on the hands themselves neither the available photo nor the verbal description is excessively clear, but it would appear that these hands associate themselves with the Herculaneum and St. Louis hands by lacking, among the commoner attributes, the thyrsus, bust of Sabazius, Hermes-bust, and small vessel. They are different, in that they also lack the eagle and thunderbolt, but a very large bird observing the mother and child¹⁵ is prominent on one of them. The hands also seem to possess a number of other attributes, of difficult interpretation.

As well as full-figure statuettes attached to hands, there are also a number of Phrygian-capped busts attached to them. Blinkenberg lists 6¹⁶ of which the best example is the famous Avenches hand¹⁷

from ancient Aventicum, in Switzerland, probably the handsomest of all these monuments still extant. Of Blinkenberg's common attributes, this hand is lacking the eagle and thunderbolt, double flute, offering table and knife, the scales, cymbals, and caduceus, the thyrsus, whip, and small vessel, as well as the bird near the mother and child. The lack of the caduceus and thyrsus, however, is made up for my busts of Hermes and Dionysus, as well as one of Cybele; the lack of the usual noisemakers by a drum and a bell. The bust of Sabazius is bearded, and so far as shown, barechested, but wears a Phrygian cap.

In addition to full-figure statuettes still attached to hands, there are also several such now detached therefrom. Blinkenberg knew of four¹⁸ which conform to the type of the St. Louis and Herculaneum hands, and of one in Paris,¹⁹ which shows Sabazius standing, foot on ram's head, holding a pine cone and a staff, which is now lost. (This representation resembles Sabazius on the Copenhagen plaque, to be discussed below, but it is hard to see how it could have been attached to a hand.) To his list can be added three more, one of the normal type,²⁰ and two which stand out because, like the figure still attached to one of the Pompeii hands discussed above, they add a moon-crescent to Sabazius' head. One of them is in the Herzog-Anton-Ulrich Museum, Braunschweig, and the other in the Museum of Art and Archaeology of the University of Missouri, Columbia.²¹ The Columbia statuette has under the crescent a Phrygian cap coming down on both sides of the head, whereas the one from Braunschweig is capless and has both hands broken off, so that it cannot be determined whether they were in an attitude of blessing.²²

1) On the basis of these identifications, therefore, it has proved possible to attribute to Sabazius a number of non-inscribed metal plaques, four²³ of which were already known to Blinkenberg in 1904. One, possibly from Rome, is in the National Museum of Copenhagen.²⁴ This is a bronze plaque, originally plated with tin, apparently once soldered onto a stronger piece of metal. In hammered relief decoration it shows Sabazius standing in an aedicula. In the gable, in addition to some stars, we see Helios in a four-horse chariot. In the field, left and right over the aedicula, we see the Dioscuri. Sabazius is bearded, and is dressed in "Phrygian"

costume, consisting of cap, sleeved tunic, leggings, and boots (not a long gown). He has his right foot on a ram's head. In his outstretched right hand he holds a pine-cone, and in his left a scepter topped with a typical votive hand such as the ones which we have been discussing. In the cluttered field, we can descry, at bottom left, an altar, which seems to form part of the building, and at bottom right, a tree-trunk with pine-branch growing out of it. This too seems to form part of the building. On the trunk, we see a lizard and a snake, while an eagle, with a wreath in its beak, sits on top. In the upper left and right corners, we see Selene and Helios, and the caps of the Dioscuri. The remaining attributes are, on the left, top to bottom, a scale, a fly, a haunch of meat, crossed flutes, winged thunderbolt, mouse gnawing on meat, whip (?), bull, yoke, crater, club, hydria, rosette, cornucopia. Between the deity's legs we see a turtle and a bee. On the right, top to bottom, can be distinguished a grasshopper, two rosettes, an upside-down vessel (?), a caduceus, two cymbals, an ear of grain, a plow, and a frog. It is obvious that the field, then, contains most of the attributes usually associated with Sabazius on the hands, plus a number of others, such as the various insects, which are only occasionally present on the hands. The snake around the tree takes us back to the votive reliefs discussed at the beginning of this paper, whereas the Dioscuri represent a new association of Sabazius with other divinities. The hand on the end of the staff shows us how many such hands may have been used in cult (others, however, have feet which allow them to be stood up on an altar), whereas the plates themselves, as Blinkenberg shows, seem to have served as chest-pieces on priests' garments.

2) There exist also two bronze plates, hinged together, now in the East Berlin Antiquarium. There are traces of original gold-plating. They are possibly also originally from Rome.²⁵ The central plate shows Cybele on a throne, flanked by Hermes on the left and Attis on the right.

Cybele has a turret-crown and a poppy-flower, and is holding a lion-cub on her lap. Attis, in Phrygian garb, is holding a flower, whereas Hermes, nude but for a cape, has his petasus and caduceus, and is holding a money-bag. In the field, there are cymbals and crossed flutes, while the two figures on the back of Cybele's throne hold a wreath over her head. In the gable, there is the quadriga of the sun.

On the left plate, we see Sabazius standing, as on the Copenhagen plaque, but with his left leg raised somewhat higher, as if resting on some large object, now lost. He holds a pine-cone in his outstretched right hand, while in his left hand there is a scepter topped with a votive hand. In the pediment, we see an eagle and cymbals, whereas the field provides a star, a bunch of grapes, a rosette, caduceus, whip, scales, cornucopia, flutes (?), altar with fire (?), offering cakes, snake (or lizard?), fly, bucranium, turtles, and various indistinct objects.

We are clearly in the same iconographical realm as the Copenhagen plaque and the hands, but the addition of Cybele and Attis to the gods associated with Sabazius is what strikes us particularly here, and is reminiscent of the presence of the Cybele-bust on the Avenches hand.²⁶

3) Also known for a long time, and associated with Sabazius already by Blinkenberg,²⁷ are two relief-busts in the Vatican collection.²⁸ They are ostensibly from Bolsena (ancient Volsinii), but Blinkenberg doubts this provenience, thinking they belong rather to the Gallo-Roman artistic style.

3a) One, the more crudely rendered of the two, has a bust of Sabazius bearded, with Phrygian cap. The right hand is holding a pine-cone, and the left a staff, surmounted by an object perhaps intended to represent a votive hand. A snake is wrapped around this staff. Sabazius is dressed in a sleeved tunic, held in front by a brooch. The relief on this plaque is comparatively low, the beard and drapery being indicated with incisions, the arms not detached from the background, and the metal plaque including a considerable amount of field space around the representation, only the top of the god's head protruding beyond it. In the corners, there are holes for attachment to a backing.

3b) The other is a more finished-looking product, in higher relief approaching sculpture in the round. It is cast, rather than hammered. The part of the plaque which might represent background is absent, and the hands are detached from the body. The hair and beard are in Antonine or Severan style, and the whole piece has a more classicizing flavor than the other. Sabazius is shown bareheaded and barechested, except for a fold of cloak on his left shoulder. In his right hand he holds a pine-cone, and in his left,

what appears to be a branch, around which a snake is wound. There is an eagle perched on his right shoulder. At the bottom of the represented part of the divinity's chest there are an eight-part offering cake, a crater, and a ram's head. Remarkably, there is also a representation of Mithras killing the bull, something which again establishes a connection between Sabazius and another cult, hitherto unrepresented.²⁹

4) To these plaques, all of which were known at the time of the publication of Blinkenberg's work in 1904, one further set of plaques can securely be added. These were found at Ampurias (ancient Emporion), Spain, in 1908, in a child's grave, but not adequately published until 1953.³⁰ The plaques are of bronze, once silvered. The larger plaque shows Sabazius, bearded facing the viewer, with Phrygian cap, sleeved tunic reaching below the knees, leggings, and apparently boots. The clothes are covered with a pattern of squares and dots. Sabazius' right hand is raised in a gesture of blessing, with rays coming out from around it. The left hand holds a long scepter, perhaps once topped with a votive hand, not now preserved. The right foot is placed on a ram's head. There are three small two-handled craters between the feet. On a tree to the viewer's left, one sees a snake around the trunk, foliage, and pinecones (?) on top, a bust of Dionysus coming out of the top of the tree. In front of the tree are crossed thyrsi, a drum, and two small bells. To the viewer's right there is clearly a pine-tree, a crested snake being wound around it. Farther to the right is a woodcutter with an axe.³¹ Under each of the trees is a semi-circle. To the left is a woman making an offering on an altar, accompanied by a lizard and two turtles. To the right is a woman holding a baby, with a bird and a reptile. A moon and star are at the upper left, but apparently there never was room for a balancing sun. Going down the left side, we also see a sacrificial knife, a winged caduceus, and a flaming altar. In front of the altar is a large crater. Two typical votive hands are set up on the altar.

Of a probable pair of side-plaques, only one is preserved. It shows a Dioscurus, nude but for cap and boots, with horse and lance. There is a star in the field. There are nail-holes on both plaques to attach them to a backing. In this case, however, we must ask ourselves whether we are dealing with a priest's pectoral.

Or do we not rather have the decoration for a box? Unlike the Copenhagen and Berlin plaques, there is no trace of aedicula-form.

Clearly here we are again in the presence of the usual iconographic repertory already well-established for Sabazius. The wood-cutter is new and hard to explain. The mother and child scene is transferred here from the hands, and supplemented by a scene of a woman making an offering. Since the plaques were found in a child's grave, we may have here a poignant reminder of the hopes for the child at whose birth these plaques were dedicated, only to be buried with it a short time later. On the other hand, the presence of the bird again, so noticeable on one of the Pompeii hands³² causes it to look as if we are not dealing with a human event, but that some mythical scene in the legend of Sabazius may here be represented. Perhaps a reflection of this legend is to be found in the Strabo-passage³³ in which Sabazius is said to be in some way the son of a mother-goddess. This fact would also account for the occasional iconographic links with Cybele, as on the Berlin plaques, and the epigraphical connection with Mother Hipta.³⁴

II. *The temptation to use the term "Sabazius" for various representations of Dionysus*

Now the earlier authors on the subject, such as Blinkenberg and Eisele³⁵ were quite specific in their rejection of other attempts which had been made to see Sabazius in various monuments. Of recent years, however, various scholars have wanted to identify as Sabazius a variety of iconographical types, and the admonitions of earlier authors have gone unheeded.

One large group of these identifications owes its origin to an article by Ludwig Curtius, which appeared in 1928.³⁶ I am not sure that I am able to follow, much less reproduce, the tenuous arguments which he used, but Curtius essentially wants to add to the repertory of Sabazius-monuments three new types:

- 1) A type of bearded statue, of which several variants exist. One example is clearly labeled Sardanapalus, after the legendary Assyrian king.
- 2) A bearded, usually eastern-clad camel-rider, such as the one accompanied by musicians on an Attic aryballos, now in London, or

the one on an archaic bronze from Camirus, also in London. The identification of the bronze would, incidentally, push the presence of Sabazius in Greek art back many years before his first attestation in literature, a point to which we shall return later.

3) A type of winged, bearded, polos-bearing divinity, which appears not infrequently in ancient art in a frontal, heraldic position, often without feet, but with lower extremities ending in spiral decorations, such as an example which Curtius illustrates from a marble throne in Berlin. This type has particularly caught on in the literature, and has served as the basis, for instance, of D. M. Robinson's identification as Sabazius of the figure portrayed on a bronze plaque from Olynthus.³⁷ The "identifications" of Sabazius inspired by Curtius' article are too numerous for me to catalogue all of them here. Suffice it to say that references to some of them are to be found in the bibliography of W. Fauth's article on Sabazius in *Der kleine Pauly*.³⁸ Only M. P. Nilsson³⁹ has seen fit to dispute the identification, and that on general historical, rather than on iconographical grounds.

Yet if we look back at the assured Sabazius-figures, we observe that the only point of resemblance which they have with Curtius' types is the beard, unless one wishes to count the noisy procession which accompanies the camel-rider on the aryballos as another sign of association with Dionysus. Nowhere in the assured representations is there a polos, nowhere wings, nowhere legs that end in volutes, nowhere camels. On the other hand, nowhere in Curtius' types are there rams, snakes, or eagles; nowhere are there caducei or pine-cones, to name only a few of the standard attributes on the hands and plaques; nowhere are there signs of association with Cybele or Hermes; nowhere the Dioscuri, or hands held in an attitude of blessing. Surely then, Curtius' association of these types with Sabazius is the sheerest fantasy, and does not deserve the respect which it has received from uncritical scholars.

It is hard, from Curtius' article, to divine just why he chose these three types to identify as Sabazius. But there is another article, by Robert Turcan,⁴⁰ in which the underlying reasons are stated somewhat more clearly. Essentially, Turcan wishes to use the name Sabazius for some figures of an elderly bearded divinity, clad in feminine-looking garments and with a suggestion of her-

maphroditism under the clothing, wearing also a modius or a skull-cap. This figure occurs also alongside the usual youthful, languid Dionysus on a number of Dionysiac sarcophagi, four of which Turcan analyses in detail, and elsewhere. Now clearly, at first glance, there is nothing more to identify these figures as Sabazius from an iconographical point of view, than there is in the case of Curtius' types, and the occasional presence of an eagle, a snake (both, as we have pointed out, the most banal of animals in ancient religious iconography), a lizard, or a ram in the general vicinity of these figures cannot justify more than an appellation such as "elderly Dionysus with some attributes of Sabazius."⁴¹

The reasons behind Turcan's desire to identify these figures as Sabazius lie in the identification of Sabazius with Dionysus, common in ancient literary sources from Cicero⁴² onwards, and most specifically a couple of passages in Diodorus Siculus.⁴³ It is worth our while to examine these passages. In the course of a long section, occupying the end of Book III and the beginning of Book IV, on Dionysus and all the variations in his myths, Diodorus makes two statements which directly concern us: that there was a second, older Dionysus, born of Zeus and Persephone, and called Sabazius by some;⁴⁴ and that the older Dionysus wore a long beard, because that was the custom of the ancients, as opposed to the beardless effeminate Dionysus.⁴⁵

First, it should be noted that consistency is hardly to be brought into Diodorus' long and rambling account. At times there are three Dionysuses.⁴⁶ Elsewhere the elder Dionysus' beard is attributed to Indian customs.⁴⁷ And so on. But Diodorus is not alone in seeing a connection between Dionysus and Sabazius. Among reasonably early authors we find it also, as we have mentioned, in Cicero: "Dionysos habemus multos...tertium Cabiros patre eumque regem Asiae fuisse, cui Sabazia sunt instituta"—a passage, that aside from introducing a Cabirus, is remarkably similar to that of Diodorus and that of Strabo, who, as we have observed, makes Sabazius the son of the Great Mother (see above p. 20). Although none of these authors names his source, I think it can safely be said that all are excerpting a common mythographical tradition, if not the exact same source. Naming of sources is reserved for the lexicographer Harpocration,⁴⁸ on whom the entire lexicographical and scholiastic tradition seems to depend.⁴⁹

Now Harpocraton, as does also the Scholiast on Aristophanes' *Birds*, gives as his source the rather shadowy Amphiheus, a local historian of Heraclea Pontica, who flourished in the second century B.C., while stating also that Mnaseas, a third-century B.C. geographer and mythographer from Patara in Lycia, holds that Sabazius is the son of Dionysus—not the older form, as Diodorus' and Turcan's hypothesis have it.

Whatever the ultimate source of this tradition, however, it seems reasonable to me to suppose that it originated out of an attempt to explain the references to Sabazius in Aristophanes in which the god unquestionably appears as an ecstatic divinity.⁵⁰ This attempt probably becomes combined, from early on, as it explicitly is in Strabo⁵¹ with an attempt to explain the mysterious cry, *euoi saboi*, which played a part in the reprehensible religious activities attributed by Demosthenes to Aeschines and his mother.⁵²

As well as the desire to elucidate passages in Aristophanes and Demosthenes, another factor in this mythographical development can have been the knowledge, among scholars, that there were two distinct ways of depicting Dionysus in art, and the desire to account for the disparity in mythological terms. At all events, it seems to me that such an identification can have taken place only in a place and at a time that actual Sabazius-worship was virtually unknown, perhaps in early Hellenistic Alexandria, such as would befit Mnaseas, known to have been a pupil of Eratosthenes, and the unknown source of Amphiheus. For it has long been observed⁵³ that the inscriptions, the most articulate documents of the cult, do not identify Sabazius with Dionysus, but rather, if with any god, with Zeus.⁵⁴ It is overstating the case to say with Eisele, *ouden pros ton Dionyson*,⁵⁵ as there are unquestionably some Dionysiac elements in the iconography of Sabazius, as we have seen on the Avenches hand and the Ampurias plaques, for example. But it is even possible for a banal Zeus type to be labeled Sabazius, as we have seen in the case of the Vichy plaques, whereas we have no attestation of a banal Dionysiac type so labeled. And it is in the Zeus-direction that the iconography of the definitely ascribable monuments exerts the greater pull on Sabazius, the Dionysiac elements being of distinctly secondary importance.

Now in the light of all the background information which we

have amassed, let us return to the Diodorus-passage and ask ourselves whether it can serve as adequate basis for giving the appellation Sabazius or even Dionysus-Sabazius to Curtius' types, Turcan's type, or any other bearded Dionysus-types. I think the necessity of a negative answer emerges fairly clearly. Not only is there the lack of iconographical similarities with the assured representations, which we have already noted, but Diodorus' passage itself, and indeed the entire literary tradition linking Dionysus and Sabazius, appears, when placed against the monuments, as being something of secondary importance, something deviating from the norm, not establishing it. Now Turcan has done us the favor of pointing out that Dionysus can appear in two forms simultaneously, and I am willing to let him use the title, if he wishes, of Dionysus Bassareus, or Indian Dionysus, for the older type which he distinguishes. I am, however, totally unconvinced that the appellation Dionysus-Sabazius is appropriate, as it simply fails to stand up when comparison is made with the assured Sabazius-monuments. Indeed, carrying the Curtius-Turcan line of argumentation to its logical absurdity would involve using the term Dionysus-Sabazius for every bearded Dionysus all the way back to Attic black-figured vase-painting.⁵⁶ We would thus be forced to conclude that a well-known artistic type from the late sixth century B.C. is to be identified with a god attested only a century later, and at that sparsely, and as something exotic. This conclusion strikes me as untenably paradoxical.⁵⁷

III. *The temptation to identify various Zeus-types as Sabazius*

Other fairly recent attempts to identify various figures as Sabazius seem more inspired by the epigraphically better-attested Zeus-syncretism. They inspire varying degrees of confidence. I will treat them in the order in which they seem to me to merit belief, from the most to the least convincing:

1) The best case for identification as Sabazius among these items can be made for the representation on a hammered silver plaque, broken at the bottom, discovered at Tekija, Yugoslavia, on the Danube, in the course of excavating for construction on June 12, 1948.⁵⁸

The preserved portion of the plaque shows an aedicula with

vegetative ornaments and rosettes in the pediment. Under it there is a male divinity in three-quarter view. He is bearded and draped. He is probably intended as seated, since part of a throne seems visible to the viewer's right. In the field to the left there is a winged caduceus, and a winged insect of some kind. Perhaps the god held a patera in his right hand. A similar plaque with a representation probably intended for Cybele was found at the same time.

There is, unfortunately, not enough preserved of this figure for us to be sure that a representation of Sabazius is intended, but at least nothing in the preserved part militates against such a supposition. The use of a silver plaque, the aedicula, and the vegetative ornament are all paralleled in unquestionable Sabazius-monuments. The caduceus is also a frequent attribute of this god, the insect occasional. One might expect the divinity to be wearing a Phrygian cap, but he is apparently bareheaded—unusual but not unparalleled for Sabazius—insofar as can be determined from the fact that the top of his head is squashed against the top of the aedicula. The fact that a similar plaque with Cybele was found in the same context lends credence to the identification, as Cybele is shown with Sabazius on the Avenches hand and the Berlin plaques. Given, however, the fragmentary state of the object, definite conclusions as to the identity of the divinity portrayed will have to be withheld.

2) More dubious is a stone stele in the form of naiskos (aedicula) from ancient Philippopolis (Plovdiv), in Bulgaria.⁵⁹ There are two registers, the upper one centering on a bearded male divinity. He is clad in tunic, leggings, and boots, and wears a Phrygian cap. He is facing three-quarters to the right, and has his left foot on an animal's head, which is indistinct, but a ram is not excluded. In his upraised right hand he is holding what may be a pine-cone (if so, he seems about to throw it) and in his left hand what may be a thyrsus. Around him we see smaller figures of Helios, Selene, Hermes, Pan, Tyche, and others too indistinct to identify. In the lower register there is a typical Thracian rider with various indistinct figures surrounding him.⁶⁰

There is nothing in the garb of the divinity to speak against the identification as Sabazius, and, actually, any Zeus-type with Phrygian cap is itself enough to suggest the possibility that we may be dealing with a representation of Sabazius. On the other hand,

the threatening, active stance is quite foreign to other Sabazius-representations. So too is the fact of association with the Thracian rider. Finally,⁶¹ the other Sabazius-plaques surround the central figure not so much with other divinities (although some appear, *e.g.*, on the Ampurias plaque) as with attributes, and here the Plovdiv stele is definitely out of line. Again, I think our judgment must remain suspended as to whether the artisan intended this figure for Sabazius, and whether the average ancient viewer would so have recognized it.

3) From this point on, the connection of the monuments with Sabazius becomes ever more tenuous. There is, for instance, a marble equestrian statue in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Here the divinity, clad in chiton, leggings, and boots, is bearded and bareheaded. He also carries a torch, something otherwise unattested in Sabazius-iconography. The animal's head under the horse's right forefoot is more likely to be that of a bull than that of a ram. There is a certain vague resemblance to the one assured equestrian representation of Sabazius (see above, p. 10) but assuredly not enough to justify the identification. Indeed the identification was first made as a sort of afterthought by C. J. Vermeule, in the article in which the piece is first published.⁶² In the most recent treatment of the piece⁶³ the identification as Sabazius is quietly dropped, but not, unfortunately, before it had found its way into the literature.

4) Next to be considered is a bronze plaque from Tibiscum, now Caransebeș, in Romania. This plaque shows a bearded, bareheaded divinity, in three-quarter view to the left. Except for a cape over his shoulders, he is nude. In his right hand, he holds a thunderbolt, and in his left a scepter. Near his right foot is an eagle. The whole is within an aedicula, with the architrave making an arch over the divinity's head. This plaque was first claimed for Sabazius by M. Macrea.⁶⁴ Yet there is nothing whatever, except the aedicula-form (which is, of course, meaningless) in the representation to recommend the identification as Sabazius. Nudity is completely foreign to genuine Sabazius-representations, the only ones even showing Sabazius bareheaded being the Vichy plaques (see above, p. 11), in which an undistinguished Zeus-representation has been pressed into service for Sabazius, and the aberrant Vatican bust-plaque, (see

above, p. 18) with the Mithraic tauroctony (the Sabazius-bust on the Avenches hand hardly counts). But surely the fact that in one instance a banal Zeus-representation was forced to make do for Sabazius does not justify our claiming for Sabazius every such Zeus-type. Such colorless Zeus-types are legion, and claiming all of them for Sabazius would change Sabazius from an obscurity into one of the most popular gods of all antiquity.

Now if one looks at the context of Macrea's article, the reason for the attempted identification becomes a little more apparent. Macrea has done the scholarly world a service, in that he has assembled all the genuine Sabazius-material (inscriptions and hands) from Dacia. But it turned out that there were no visual representations of the god to fill out the picture of the cult in that area. This should have come as no surprise—compared with the inscriptions and the hands, representations of the god in art are rare. Yet Macrea seems to have felt himself compelled to find an artistic parallel to the other evidence, and has come up with this totally unconvincing identification as the result.

5) Much the same can be said in the case of a marble statuette from Henchir Chaada in Tunisia.⁶⁶ It shows a divinity bearded, bareheaded, and nude. He is accompanied by an eagle at his left foot, and apparently once held a thunderbolt in his right hand, a cornucopia in his left. The circumstances that led to the identification as Sabazius of this totally un-Sabazius-like piece are the same as in the case of the Tibiscum plaque. Struck by discoveries of Sabazius-hands and inscriptions in North Africa,⁶⁷ Ch. Picard again cast about to find a supporting example in the plastic arts, and came up with this one. Yet there is no reason whatever to connect this representation with assured Sabazius-types. Only the eagle and putative thunderbolt occur frequently on genuine Sabazius-pieces, but they are signs that Sabazius is being likened to Zeus, not the other way around. Likewise the cornucopia is occasionally found with Sabazius, as on the Copenhagen and Berlin plaques, but is hardly particularly characteristic of him.

6) Ingenious also, but hardly convincing, is an attempt by D. Tudor.⁶⁸ This scholar reunites two fragments of a stone plaque from ancient Dobreta (Gura Vâii-Breznita), one with a seated Zeus-type, accompanied by eagle and moon (?), holding lance and

pine-cone (?), the other with the head of a standing (?) figure and its upstretched right hand holding a sun-god-head. Tudor wishes to take the first of these figures as I. O. M. Sabazius. But this rests only on the bare assumption that the seated Zeus is Sabazius (the strongest evidence for this would be the pine-cone, if one could be sure that it is really there), and the presumed reading of the letter B as the only even partially preserved letter of an assumed first line of the accompanying inscription, which Tudor wishes to restore:

[I. O. M. Sa]b[azio et]
 I. O. M. Zb [lalsurdo (vel sim.)]
 Ant[onius (?)]
 C[]
 Q[]⁶⁹

IV. *Conclusion*

To sum up: If we reestablish strict criteria for the iconography of Sabazius, we will throw out not only Curtius' types, but also almost everything else which has been identified as Sabazius since Blinkenberg wrote in 1904. We will be left with the Ampurias plaques, and possibly the Tekija plaque, as additions to the body of Sabazius-representations which have accrued since then. The Plovdiv relief can be added only with much uncertainty. None of the Dionysus-inspired attempts at identification commands real respect. The growth in the number of votive hands and inscriptions has been somewhat faster than that in the number of full-figure artistic representations, but still not overwhelmingly so. It is doubtful whether we will ever possess a vast or rapidly growing body of information about this divinity, but it is important that we restrict ourselves to what can be attributed to him with certainty, rather than wishfully inflate the corpus with additional objects, which can only serve to distort the conclusions to be drawn from it.

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ABSA = *Annual of the British School at Athens*, London, 1894-

AS = *Anatolian Studies*, London, 1951-

BCH = *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique*, Athens and Paris, 1877-

CIL = *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, Berlin, 1862-

CMRDM = E. N. Lane, *Corpus Monumentorum Religionis Dei Menis* (Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain = EPRO, 19), Leiden, 1971-78.

CRAI = *Académie des inscriptions et belles lettres, Comptes rendus*, Paris, 1857-

Cumont, *Textes et monuments* = F. Cumont, *Textes et monuments figurés relatifs aux mystères de Mithra*, Brussels, 1896-99.

Hermann, *Ergebnisse* = P. Hermann, *Ergebnisse einer Reise in Nordostlydien*, Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien, Denkschriften, Phil.-Hist. Klasse, 80, 1962.

Hommages Vermaseren = *Hommages à Maarten J. Vermaseren* (EPRO, 68), Leiden, 1978.

IG = *Inscriptions Graecae*, Berlin, 1873-

Keil and von Premerstein, *Zweite Reise* = J. Keil and A. von Premerstein, *Bericht über eine zweite Reise in Lydien*, Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien, Denkschriften, Phil.-Hist. Klasse, 54, ii, 1911.

Mélanges Rome = *École française de Rome, Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire*, Paris, 1881-1970.

Moretti, *IGUR* = L. Moretti, *Inscriptiones Graecae Urbis Romae*, Rome, 1968-

Nilsson, *GGR* = M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* (Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft, 5, ii), Munich, I³, 1967; II², 1961.

RA = *Revue Archéologique*, Paris, 1842-

Vermaseren, *CCCA* = M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus Cultus Cybelae Attidisque* (EPRO, 50), Leiden, 1977-

Vermaseren, *CIMRM* = M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus Inscriptionum et Monumentorum Religionis Mithriacae*, The Hague, 1956-60.

¹ Most conveniently illustrated A. B. Cook, *Zeus*, II, i, Cambridge, 1925, p. 183.

² Most conveniently illustrated Cook, *Zeus*, II, i, Pl. XIX.

³ Probably Kula, see Lane, *AS*, 25, 1975, 105. It is best illustrated by a line-drawing, Cook, *Zeus*, II, i, p. 284. Only the top portion is now preserved, in the Manisa Museum, L. Robert, *Hellenica*, VI, Paris, 1948, pp. 111-113.

⁴ Keil and von Premerstein, *Zweite Reise*, p. 84, no. 27.

⁵ Again, it is most conveniently illustrated, Cook, *Zeus*, II, i, fig. 185.

⁶ *IG*, XIV, 1021; Moretti, *IGUR*, I, 185. The identification as Sabazius is due to F. Matz and F. von Dühn, *Antike Bildwerke in Rom*, III, Leipzig, 1882, p. 143, no. 3763. In part they relied on similarity to no. 1 above, which is known only from a poor sketch anyway. But except for the long gown, there is not much resemblance between the two representations, certainly not in stance. Matz and von Dühn mention no beard, so I assume their figure is beardless.

⁷ Blinkenberg, *op.cit.*, no. Al; L. Robert, *Collection Froehner, I, Les Inscriptions breagues*, Paris, 1936, p. 136, no. 89 and Plate 42.

⁸ Blinkenberg, no. E2; H. B. Walters, *British Museum, Catalogue of the Bronzes, Greek, Roman, and Etruscan*, London, 1889, no. 874; *IG*, XIV, 1022.

^{8a} Blinkenberg, no. A1; Walters, *op. cit.*, no. 3216.

⁹ Hands found since or missed by Blinkenberg. Asterisk designates findspot, if known. The publication listed is the most detailed to my knowledge:

1. Sarajevo, *Antička Bronza u Jugoslaviji*, Belgrade, 1969, p. 102, no. 134.
2. Cleveland, *Cleveland Museum Bulletin*, March 1971, p. 95.
3. Thessaloniki (*Edessa), *Archaiologikon Deltion*, 22, i, 1967, pp. 149-155.
4. Baltimore, *Essays in Memory of Karl Lehmann, Marsyas*, Suppl. I, 1964, pp. 132-135.
5. St. Louis, *Muse*, 4, 1970, pp. 43-48.
6. Columbia, Mo., *ibid.*
7. Köln, *Kölner Jahrbuch*, 9, 1967-8, pp. 107-111.
8. and 9. *Pompeii, 2 hands, *Accademia di Archeologia, Lettere, e Belle Arti, Napoli, Rendiconti*, N. S. 25, 1960, pp. 7-9.
10. Freiburg in Breisgau (*Dangstetten), *Rheinisch-Germanische Kommission, Berichte*, 51-52, 1970-1, pp. 197 ff.
11. *Voysil (near Plovdiv), Bulgaria, *Vestnik Drevnej Istorii*, 1977, ii, p. 66 and Pl. 2.
12. *Gradnitsa, Bulgaria, *ibid.*, pp. 58-76 and Pl. I, a-e.
13. Budapest, *Apulum*, 4, 1961, p. 76 and fig. 5.
14. Algiers (*Tipasa), M. Leglay, *Les religions orientales dans l'Afrique ancienne*, Algiers, 1956, pp. 12-16.
15. *Padria, Sardinia, G. Spano, *Memoria sopra l'antica città di Gurulis Vetus*, 1867, pp. 12-13 (misses by Blinkenberg).
16. Paris, Youssef Hajjar in *Hommages Vermaseren*, Leiden, 1978, I, pp. 455-472.
17. *Vadejës, Albania, *Archeologia*, 78, 1975, p. 12.
18. and 19. *Pleven, Bulgaria, *Bulgarska Akademiia na Naukite, Arkh. Inst., Izvestiia*, 12, 1938, p. 442, no. 2. Two hands so similar to each other as possibly to be from the same mold.
20. In trade, *BCH*, 51, 1927, p. 210, note 2.
21. Amiens, Cumont, *Les Religions orientales dans l'empire romain*, 4th ed., Paris, 1929, Pl. 15, no. 2. Unusual in that there is a bracelet around the wrist from which 3 phalluses (original?) are suspended.

¹⁰ So the mother-and-child scene has generally been interpreted, but see below, note 15.

¹¹ Blinkenberg, *op. cit.*, no. E 17.

¹² Best illustrated V. Tran Tam Tinh, *Le Culte des divinités orientales à Herculaneum* (EPRO, 17), Leiden, 1971, fig. 32-33, with pp. 94-95, no. 69; Blinkenberg no. E13.

¹³ Lane, *Muse*, 4, 1970, 43-48.

¹⁴ Nos. 8 and 9 in the list of new hands, note 9, above.

¹⁵ Something which militates in favor of a mythological interpretation of the scene, as suggested by Y. Hajjar, in *Hommages Vermaseren*, I, pp. 455-472.

¹⁶ His nos. E 4 and E 8-E 12.

¹⁷ His no. E 12 and Plate III.

¹⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 99, two of them of known provenience, Amiens and Sardinia.

¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 98.

²⁰ Giulia Sfameni-Gasparro, *I culti orientali in Sicilia* (EPRO, 31), Leiden, 1973, p. 278, no. 337 and fig. 106.

²¹ For both, see Lane, *Muse*, 8, 1974, pp. 34-37.

²² For present purposes, I am considering the Columbia hand to be the same as that published by H. H. von der Osten in *Orientalia Suecana*, 2, 1953, pp. 29 ff.

²³ Or five, counting both Berlin examples. See note 26 below.

²⁴ Blinkenberg, Pl. II.

²⁵ Blinkenberg, fig. 40. Vermaseren, *CCCA*, III, 304, while indicating that the plaques once had a wooden backing, sticks to the old idea that they once were a diadem, rather than decoration for a priest's garment.

²⁶ Another set of plaques very similar to the preceding and also probably from Rome is likewise in the Berlin Antiquarium. Vermaseren, *loc. cit.*, erroneously states that they are in Bonn. A letter from the Berlin Museum informs me that they are in too poor condition to permit photography.

²⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 97.

²⁸ Best illustrated, Nilsson, *GGR*, II², Pl. 14. See also W. Helbig, *Führer durch die öffentlichen Sammlungen klassischer Altertümer in Rom*⁴, 1963, nos. 818 and 820.

²⁹ This representation is the reason for the inclusion of these two items in the Mithraic corpora of Cumont and Vermaseren, Cumont, *Textes et monuments*, II 104; Vermaseren, *CIMRM*, I, 659. If the *Nama Sebesio* of *CIL*, VI, 719 = 30819 has anything to do with Sabazius, this would establish another connection between these two cults.

³⁰ The best publication is A. Garcia y Bellido, *Les religions orientales dans l'Espagne romaine* (EPRO, 5), Leiden, 1967, pp. 73-81.

³¹ This is a puzzling figure; in a Lydian inscription—most generally available W. Buckler, *ABSA*, 21, 1914-16, p. 170 or Keil and von Premerstein, *Zweite Reise*, p. 84—the cutting of trees, even in ignorance, from Sabazius' sacred grove is considered a sin that must be expiated.

³² See above note 15.

³³ X, iii, 15.

³⁴ E.g. Herrmann, *Ergebnisse*, pp. 50-51, no. 45.

³⁵ In his article, s.v. Sabazios, in Roscher's *Lexikon*.

³⁶ *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts*, 43, 1928, pp. 281-297.

³⁷ *Excavations at Olynthus*, X, 1941, p. 16 and fig. 6.

³⁸ IV, 1972, cols. 1478-80.

³⁹ *GGR*, I³, 836-7, note 5.

⁴⁰ Dionysus Dimorphos, *Mélanges Rome*, 70, 1958, pp. 243-294.

⁴¹ Be it noted in passing that Turcan concerns himself hardly at all with the actual monuments of the Sabazius-cult, being content to mention the hands in a cursory way on pp. 279-80. Rather he emphasizes the literary sources, and in so doing, I think, shows the danger of relying on them too heavily. I am not denying that Turcan has provided valuable insights into the theology of the Dionysiac mysteries of the Roman period, with his emphasis on the father-son relationship of the two Dionysuses, the older of whom can be seen as a kind of hermaphroditic Zeus, as well as a sort of Dionysus of the underworld, the symbolism of the pressing of the grapes and the reunion of the juice in the resulting wine, etc. I am disputing, however, the appropriateness of the name Sabazius for the older Dionysus-figure, except as a modern extension and exaggeration of a misuse of the term already incipient in certain ancient sources which knew little, if anything, about actual Sabazius-cult.

⁴² *De Natura Deorum*, III, 23. Cf. also *De Legibus*, II, 37.

⁴³ Other passages in the same tradition are Strabo, x, 3, 15; Macrobius, I, 18, 1, giving Alexander Polyhistor—1st cent. B.C.—as his source; Damascius, 160 = II, 44, 3ff Ruelle; and Lydus, *De mensibus*, IV, 51 = 106-107 Wünsch. These last two passages, written long after actual Sabazius-worship has ceased to exist, introduce various ideas of the type generally known as Orphic into the discussion. The same

tradition is also represented by a long succession of lexicographers and scholiasts, for whom see below, note 49.

⁴⁴ IV, 4.

⁴⁵ IV, 5.

⁴⁶ III, 63, 3.

⁴⁷ III, 64, 3.

⁴⁸ Probably Antonine period. Harpocraton also expands on the use of Sabazius to explain the *euoi saboi* cry in Demosthenes, and uses the term *Sabos* to refer both to god and worshipper. See below note 52.

⁴⁹ This tradition includes the following: Harpocraton, s.v. *Sabazios*; Etymologicum Magnum, s.v. *Sabazios*; Etymologicum Gudianum, s.v. *Sabandios*; Eustathius, on *Odyssey* II, 16 = 1431, 45 f.; on *Iliad* XVI, 617 = 1078, 21 f.; Scholia on Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, 388; *Wasps*, 9; *Birds*, 874.

⁵⁰ Especially *Lysistrata*, 388 and *Horae*, frag. 566.

⁵¹ X, 3, 18.

⁵² *De Corona*, 258-260. Strabo is the first explicitly to connect this cry with Sabazius. From him onward, it has quite a history in the literary tradition, with *Sabos* and *Saboi* appearing in various roles. Plutarch—*Quaestiones Conviviales*, IV, 6, 2—has *Saboi* appearing as Bacchic worshippers, in a passage notorious for confusing the issue with Judaism, but not explicitly mentioning Sabazius. After Harpocraton (see above, note 48) we encounter *Sabos* again in the Orphic Hymn to Hipta, no. 49, in which the goddess, epigraphically attested as a companion of Sabazius (see note 34, above) is made into the nurse of Bacchus and someone who rejoices in the rites of *Sabos hagnos*, the name probably being understood here as a short form of Sabazius' name. Cf. also the use of *sanctus* to modify Sabazius' name in Latin epigraphy, e.g., *CIL*, VI, 30949, and Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, 8, 25. From the Orphic Hymn on we encounter *Sabos* and *Saboi* regularly as names of gods, worshippers, priests, rites, and even holy places: Hesychius, Photius, Soudas, Eutathius, Scholiast on *Wasps*.

⁵³ As far back as Eisele's Sabazius-article in Roscher's *Lexikon* and *Neue Jahrbücher für das klassische Altertum*, 23, 1909, p. 625.

Eisele particularly combatted the tendency of modern scholars to combine Dionysus and Sabazius, but his warnings have largely gone unheeded.

⁵⁴ Relatively few literary sources seem to be aware of this fact, but among those that are is Valerius Maximus, I, 3, 2, a passage that is fraught with other difficulties, but makes the Zeus-Sabazius equation, a fact which militates in favor of taking its statements seriously. Also to be enumerated are Firmicus Maternus, *De Errore Profanarum Religionum*, 10; Orphic Hymn to Sabazius, no. 48; and, at a late date, Michael Psellus, *Peri ton onomaton ton dikon*, p. 109 Boissonade, which, like Harpocraton, is an attempted explanation of the Demosthenes-passage, but leaves Dionysus out of the picture.

⁵⁵ Roscher's *Lexikon*, art. cit., col. 259.

⁵⁶ Something which Patitucci, followed by Vermaseren, *CCCA*, IV, no. 213, seems to be well on the way to doing, by using the term Dionysus-Sabazius for a seated, bearded divinity on a red-figured volute crater found at Spina.

⁵⁷ Also to be noted here is the identification as Sabazius of the bearded head under the feet of Attis on an Attis-tristis door-handle from Herculaneum or Pompeii. Picard, *RA*, 1947, i, p. 231, note 4, wishes to take this as Sabazius, using as point of identification the existence of a mitre in the figure's hair. He is followed by Vermaseren, *CCCA*, IV, no. 69.

⁵⁸ D. Mano-Zisi, *Nalaz iz Tekije* = *Narodni Muzej, Beograd, Antika II*, 1957, pp. 97-102, no. 35, and Pl. 24.

⁵⁹ Best illustrated by Tatscheva-Hitova in *Hommages Vermaseren*, vol. III, Pl. 223.

⁶⁰ Tatscheva-Hitova, *op. cit.*, pp. 1217-1230, devotes considerable space to the discussion and tentative identification of all these figures, and sees them primarily as pointing to a close relationship between Sabazius and Apollo.

⁶¹ As observed by Tatscheva-Hitova, *loc. cit.*

⁶² Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, *Bulletin*, 56, 1958, pp. 69-76.

⁶³ Exhibition catalogue, *Romans and Barbarians*, Boston, 1976, no. 73.

⁶⁴ Le Culte de Sabazius en Dacie, *Dacia*, N.S. III, 1959, p. 336.

⁶⁵ E.g., C. Picard, *RA*, 1961, ii, pp. 140, 166.

⁶⁶ Picard, *RA*, 1962, i, pp. 251-3.

⁶⁷ E.g., no. 14 in note 9, above; Mahjoubi, in *CRAI*, 1960, pp. 387-90.

⁶⁸ *Hommages Vermaseren*, III, pp. 1269 ff.

⁶⁹ In this connection, one should mention also that Prof. Vermaseren, *Vigiliae Christianae*, IV, 1950, pp. 142-156 wished to use the name Sabazius for the Zeus Masphalatenos who appears with Men on the Lydian inscription which I published as *CMRDM*, I, no. 54. This attempt would seem to rest on nothing except a desire to identify any Anatolian Zeus-type as a Zeus-Sabazios.

ASPEKTE DES ANTIKEN MEDITERRANEN HAUSKULTS*

DIETRICH WACHSMUTH

§ 1 Das Thema des Hauskults innerhalb der antiken mediterranen Religionen ist in der Forschung bisher auffällig vernachlässigt worden. Eine zusammenfassende Monographie fehlt zur griechischen¹ wie zur römischen² Religion, ebenso zur Mehrzahl der anderen Religionen im Mittelmeerraum der Antike. Es fehlt — sehr überraschend — sogar in der Regel das Stichwort in den Fachlexika, Enzyklopädien und Handbüchern der Einzeldisziplinen.³

Das Fehlen einer umfassenden Behandlung des Themas ist dabei um so auffälliger, als an der z.T. eminenten religiösen Bedeutung des Hauskults und seiner, wie wir im weiteren sehen werden, erheblichen religionswissenschaftlichen Problematik ja gar kein Zweifel bestehen kann.

Der Hauskult ist sowohl einer der ältesten Kulte der Weltreligionen wie einer der zählebigsten. Einerseits geht er zeitlich zurück bis in die Anfänge menschlichen Wohnens überhaupt, d.h., bis zur Wohnhöhle und Hüttengrube paläolithischer Jägerkultur,⁴ andererseits ist sein Fortdauern noch bis heute aufs handgreiflichste präsent, selbst wenn zum Petrefakt und zum "Brauch ohne Glaube"⁵ erstarrt.

Wenigstens stichwortartig seien hier einige wenige Beispiele genannt,⁶ um damit im Einleitungsparagraphen inhaltlich mit dem Thema vertraut zu machen:

Das noch gegenwärtig, zumindest im Ländlichen, weithin verbreitete Brauchtum beim Hausbau,⁷ zunächst bei der Grundsteinlegung mit Hammerschlag, Sinnspruch, Umtrunk und Bauopfer (z.B. eingemauerter Münzen), dann beim Richtfest mit noch heutiger sog. Aufrichtmesse und Anbringung der glückbringenden Richtkrone, schließlich mit den Einzugszeremonien der priesterlichen Hausweihe, der Gabe von Brot und Salz, dem Einzugsmahl usf.

Man denke ferner — um weiter nur ganz Geläufiges zu nennen

— an den zeichenhaft-apotropäischen Bildschmuck an Hausdach und -giebel,⁸ an das so häufige Hufeisen-Amulett an Haus- oder Stalltür,⁹ an den sog. Haussegen in Form von “Schutzzetteln” als häusliches “Universalmittel gegen alles Unheil”,¹⁰ an moderne Architektur auf “heiligen” Grundrissen,¹¹ an das mit Herd, Eßtisch, Deckengehänge, Tür, Schwelle, Dachtraufe usf. verbundene Brauchtum im Bauernhaus,¹² an die “Kultecke” mit Marienbild oder Kruzifix der katholischen mittel- und südeuropäischen Bauernwohnstube, nämlich den “Herrgottswinkel”,¹³ die “Herrgottsschroote”¹⁴ u.a., und an seine osteuropäische Entsprechung, die mit Ikonen versehene “heilige” oder “reine Ecke” (russ. *svjatoi* und *cistyj ugol*),¹⁵ oder hier auch an den russischen *domovoi*, den hinter dem Ofen wohnenden “Hausgeist”,¹⁶ der — wie der römische *Lar* — beim Umzug *mitgenommen* werden muß, was ein ebenso weltweites Wesensmerkmal der Hausgötter im Hauskult ist wie ihre Verbindung zur Feuerstelle, oder — ein allerletztes und besonders handgreifliches Beispiel dieser aus Raumgründen ganz beschränkten Auswahl — an den so auffälligen Hauskult heutiger japanischer Shinto-Religion mit häuslichem Ahnen- und Hausgötterschrein (*kamidana*) und Verehrung mehrerer spezieller Hauskultgottheiten.¹⁷ Es gibt sogar einen Abortgott namens *Benjo no Kami*, für den zu Neujahr eine Lampe angezündet wird und beim *Oh-tono-no-Hogai*-Ritual im Badezimmer und Abort Reiskörner und Reiswein als Opfer gesprenkelt werden.¹⁸

§ 2 Wegen der weltweiten Verbreitung des Hauskults wird man sich zunächst nach allgemeinen Deutungen seitens der Religionswissenschaft, Ethnologie und Volkskunde umsehen. Zugleich treten wir damit in die nähere Diskussion eines ersten noch ungeklärten hauskultlichen Aspekts ein: des Problems der Sakralität menschlicher Wohnplätze (A I). Ich stelle daher an den Anfang drei Zitate aus Untersuchungen im zu Recht anerkannten Rang von *standardworks*.

Bei Joseph Dünninger heißt es in “Hauswesen und Tagewerk” (1962², 2839):¹⁹

“Der Urgedanke des Hauses in Beheimatung und Bergung... entfaltet sich in einer Fülle von rechtlichen und kultischen Formen... Das Recht gewährleistet die Unverletzlichkeit des Hauses im Sinne des persönlichen Friedensbezirkes,

der Kult bestätigt und bekräftigt die *Heiligkeit*²⁰ des Hauses und sucht zugleich das Haus zu schützen.”

Bei Friedrich Heiler heißt es in “Erscheinungsformen und Wesen der Religion” (1961, 131f.):

“Das menschliche Haus ist an sich ein *Heiligtum*...Es trug *sakralen* Charakter.”

Bei Gerardus van der Leeuw heißt es in “Phänomenologie der Religion” (1956², 448-453):

“Haus und Tempel sind wesentlich eins... Beide sind ‘Gotteshaus’... sind ‘herausgenommene,’ *heilige* Stätte.”

Vergleicht man damit die Stellungnahmen der mediterranen Hausforschung, so trifft man teils: a) auf Ausklammerung des Sakralitätsproblems (A I), sei es absichtlich oder häufiger, weil unerkannt, unabsichtlich,²¹ teils b) auf in der Haus = Heiligtumsprädikation nahezu identische Urteile. Hierzu nur vier Belege in Auswahl zum vorderorientalischen, griechischen und römischen Privathaus.

Bei Ernst Heinrich, dem gegenwärtig “unbestrittenen Großmeister der altorientalischen Architekturgeschichte”,²² heißt es zur frühbronzezeitlichen anatolischen Siedlung Beycesultan (AA 1971, 588):

“Für uns ist wichtig festzustellen, daß der so häufig bei Einzelhäusern vorkommende Hauskult solchen Umfang annehmen kann, daß man versucht ist, das Haus als *Heiligtum* zu deuten.”

Herbert Marwitz, Klassischer Archäologe, bestreitet beim frühgriechischen Haus die Unterscheidung von “bürgerlichen” oder “sakralen” Gebäuden (GGA 228, 1976, 28):

“weil das Haus grundsätzlich ‘*sakral*’ war.”

Bei Marcel Bulard, dem Delos-Ausgräber, lesen wir zum früh-römischen Haus (La religion domestique dans la colonie Italienne de Délos, 1926, 430):

“La *villa* primitive, à la fois lieu de refuge et lieu consacré, forteresse et sanctuaire.”

Für Robert von Ihering, einem der bedeutendsten Juristen des römischen Rechts, ist in seinem klassischen Werk “Geist des römi-

schen Rechts auf den verschiedenen Stufen seiner Entwicklung” 2⁴, 1880, 158) das römische Haus, weil “Asyl” und “nicht bloß von Menschen, sondern auch von Göttern bewohnt”:

“ein *Heiligtum* im eigentlichen d.i. religiösen Sinn”, ein “Tempel der Vesta”.

Ein Überblick über beide Gruppen von Haus-Definitionen zeigt, daß bei z.T. unterschiedlichen Begründungen doch alle mit überraschender Einmütigkeit in *einem* Punkt übereinstimmen: dem der “Heiligkeit” des Hauses. Aber inwiefern *ist* das Haus “heilig”? Worin liegt das Sakralisierungsmovens?

Nach Dünninger-Heinrich beruht es im “Hauskult”, doch werden wir in § 3 im einzelnen sehen, daß das Faktum des Kultischen *allein* nicht zureicht, um ein Haus zu sakralisieren, und zwar unabhängig von der Quantität oder Qualität jeweiliger hauskultlicher Verhältnisse. Laut Heiler-van der Leeuw-Marwitz resultiert hingegen die “Heiligkeit” aus der prinzipiellen Identität von Haus und Heiligtum, doch gilt das, wie wir ab § 6 sehen werden, offensichtlich nicht einmal für noch tempellose prähistorische Zeiten.

Einen Bestimmungsschritt weiter geht schließlich van der Leeuw, indem er sich mit dem Begriff der “herausgenommenen Stätte” unverkennbar am Inaugurationsakt des römischen *templum* orientiert, bei dem ja in der Tat vom Augur ein rechteckiges Raumstück als “Ausschnitt” abgesondert wurde. Aber gerade *wenn* man von römischer religiöser Denkform ausgeht — und wir wollen wegen der bekannten “juristischen Natur der römischen Religion”²³ und der daher von hier aus zu erwartenden schärferen sakralrechtlichen Klärung daran anknüpfen —, ist auch van der Leeuws Haus = Heiligtum = *templum*-Definition schwerlich richtig. Denn:

1. trifft die religiöse Qualitas sowohl des Auguraltemplum²⁴ wie des Heiligtums, der *aedes sacra*, auf das einzelne römische Privathaus (*aedificium privatum*) nicht zu, sei es nun ländlich-bäurisch (*villa*) oder städtisch (*domus*). Weder war es ein *locus inauguratus*, also ein durch Auspikation abgesonderter und religiös limitierter Platz und damit ein *locus liberatus et effatus*, d.h. “ein durch bestimmte religiöse Formeln befriedeter Platz”,²⁵ noch aber etwa ein *locus consecratus*,²⁶ d.h. “ein rituell geheiligt-geweihter und der Gottheit

übereigneter Platz'', wie es Voraussetzung für Tempelbauten war,²⁷ folglich auch keine — im Sinne van der Leeuws — für sich aus dem Raum ''herausgenommene, heilige Stätte''.

2. Gewichtiger noch: niemals konnte das Privathaus, eben *weil* es ein *locus privatus* war, zugleich ein *locus sacer*, also eine ''heilige Stätte'' sein, wenn wir den Begriff ''heilig'' *stricto sensu* im römischen wie übrigens auch modernen religionswissenschaftlichen oder christlichen Sinne als *quod deorum habetur*, als ''Gottgehörigkeit'' fassen.²⁸ Daher ist das Privathaus weder ''an sich'' ein Heiligtum (Heiler) noch ''wesentlich eins'' mit ihm (van der Leeuw), sondern geradezu *wesensverschieden* vom *fanum*, vom tatsächlichen ''Gotteshaus'' des Tempels. Denn der förmliche Konsekrationsakt entzog diesen ja sakralrechtlich als nunmehrige *res divini iuris* und *res sacra* (und auch *publica*!) ausdrücklich jeglichem privaten Besitz und Nutzung.

In strenger Polarität dazu war vielmehr das Privathaus — und zwar *trotz* seiner religiösen Institutionen, und *darin* liegt das eigentliche, freilich meist verkannte Problem (!) — als *res humani iuris* ein *locus profanus*. In den Digesten 1,8,6,3 heißt es: *si quis ergo privatim sibi sacrum constituerit, sacrum non est, sed profanum*.²⁹ Folgerichtig daher, daß auch die gottesdienstlichen Gerätschaften des Hauskults, also die Lararien, Sakrarien, Altäre usf., *weil* im privaten Hausbesitz befindlich, nicht als *res sacrae*, als ''heilig'' galten³⁰ und daß, beispielsweise, das Verbot des *ne quid in loco sacro fiat* nicht das private *sacrarium* schützte (Dig. 43,6,1) oder daß die widerrechtliche Aneignung von *sacra privata* strafrechtlich kein Sakrileg, sondern nur Diebstahl war.³¹

§ 3 Aber was war das römische Haus, religiös verstanden, dann? Sind die Definitionen Heilers, Dünningers, van der Leeuws, Bulards usf. gänzlich abwegig? Hatte das *aedificium privatum* nichts Heiliges, nichts Sakrales? Oder handelt es sich bei der *religio domestica*, der ''häuslichen Religion'', wie der römische Hauskult mit eigenem Terminus hieß,³² infolge der andersartigen, weil ''privaten'' Voraussetzungen auch um einen anderen *religio*-Modus? Hier vermag die juristische Affäre um Ciceros palatinisches Privathaus in den Jahren 57 bis 56 v. Chr., die bisher für das Sakralitätsproblem (A I) nicht genutzt wurde, entscheidend zur Klärung beizutragen.

Kurz zur Sache:³³ Nach Ciceros Verbannung im März 58 v. Chr. hatte Publius Clodius Pulcher, der Volkstribun und Ciceros erbitterter politischer Gegner, Ciceros auf dem Palatin gelegenes Haus zunächst brandschatzen und plündern lassen, es sich dann aber über einen Mittelsmann bei der Versteigerung angeeignet. Auf einem Teil des Grundstücks errichtete er anschließend eine *Libertas*-Statue³⁴ und ließ den Platz dafür förmlich konsekrieren. Nachdem Cicero am 4. September 57 nach Rom zurückgekehrt war, betrieb er die Rückerstattung des palatinischen Besitzes, auch des konsekrierten Teils. Der spektakuläre Rechtsfall — Cicero nennt ihn im Brief an Atticus 4,2,2 eine *summa contentio de domo* (es ging dabei immerhin auch um einen Gebäudeschaden in Millionenhöhe) — wurde vor dem Senat und vor dem Pontifikal-kollegium, Roms oberster religiöser Instanz, verhandelt. Er ist das Thema von zwei Cicero-Reden: *De domo sua ad pontifices*, gehalten am 29. September 57, und *De haruspicum responso*, vermutlich vom Mai 56.³⁵

Die Hausaffäre zeigt nun mit wünschenswertester Klarheit: a) die begrifflichen Differenzierungen im klassischen römischen Recht hinsichtlich der Sakralität und Profanität von Grund und Boden, ferner b) wie kompliziert es juristisch war, eine zum *locus sacer* gewordene Liegenschaft wieder “profan”, wieder nutzbar zu machen. Für unser Thema (A I) sind dabei folgende Textpassagen relevant:

1. Erneut die Bestätigung, daß das römische Privathaus in der Tat kein “Heiligtum” (im Sinne Heilers oder van der Leeuws) war, sondern daß vielmehr beide Bereiche als jeweils “profane” und (durch Konsekration) “heilige” so distinkt wie möglich geschieden waren. In *De domo sua* 128 heißt es von der früh-römischen Zeit:

consecrabantur aedes, non privatorum domicilia, sed quae sacrae nominantur.

In Übersetzung: “Zu konsekrieren pflegte man nur Gebäude (*aedes*), die heilig (*sacrae*) heißen, nicht aber Wohnhäuser (*domicilia*) von Privatleuten.”

Im Kontext (*dom.* 127-128) wird dazu näher präzisiert: auch nach Einführung der Lex Papiria (2. Jh. v. Chr.) war die Konsekration privater Liegenschaften nur plebiszitär möglich, d.h. mit förmlicher Billigung des *populus* oder der *plebs Romana* (*dom.* 129:

Lex Papiria vetat aedis iniussu plebis consecrari; Cic. *Att.* 4,2,3: *neque populi iussu neque plebis scitu*). In jedem Fall war — wie in § 2 diskutiert — die rechtliche Folge die Besitzentäußerung. Es war dies der überraschende juristische Formfehler des Clodius, bei seiner an sich sonst korrekten Konsekration *iniussu plebis*, also ohne Plebisziteinholung gehandelt zu haben. Dieser Verstoß gegen das *ius publicum dedicandi* (*dom.* 136) wurde dann zum ausschlaggebenden Grund dafür, daß im pontifikalischen Gutachten vom Herbst 57 zu Gunsten Ciceros entschieden wurde.³⁶

2. Im Frühjahr 56 kam es zu einem Gutachten des Haruspices-Kollegiums, in dem es unter anderem warnend hieß (*har.* 9):

loca sacra et religiosa profana haberi

In Übersetzung: “Heilige und religiöse Plätze werden behandelt, als seien sie profan.”

Clodius, Aedil seit Januar 56, suchte unverzüglich den Haruspices-Bescheid für eine neue Intervention in der Hausaffäre zu nutzen. Er berief eine Volksversammlung (*contio*), klagte darüber, daß “Heiliges und religiöse Auflagen vernachlässigt, verletzt und entweiht werden” (*har.* 8: *sacra et religiones negligi, violari, pollui questus est*) und nannte als aktuellen Beleg für entweihende Profanierung von *loca sacra* Ciceros Haus, das seit Oktober 57 mit staatlichen Mitteln renoviert wurde.

Ciceros Antwort darauf in seiner Senatsrede im Mai 56 — und das macht sie für unsere Fragestellung (A I) so gewichtig — fußt z.T. argumentativ auf der sakralrechtlichen Klärung der Merkmalsbestimmung von Privathäusern. In *De haruspicum responso* 11 heißt es:

“Normalerweise (*multo maxima ex parte*) sind Privathäuser frei von *religio*” (*liberae religione* — der *religio*-Begriff soll zunächst unübersetzt bleiben). Doch gäbe es in Rom kein Haus, das von jedem “Verdacht auf *religio* so leer und rein” sei wie das eigene palatinische (*ab ista suspitione religionis tam vacua et pura*).

Wie wörtlich Cicero hierbei sakralrechtlicher Terminologie folgt, lehrt der Vergleich mit der fachjuristischen Definition des *locus purus* in den *Digesten* (11,7,2,4): *purus autem locus dicitur, qui neque sacer neque sanctus est neque religiosus, sed ab omnibus huius modi nominibus vacare videtur*.

Gleichfalls technisch ist ferner die in *De haruspicum responso* dann immer wieder neu für sein Haus wiederholte sakralrechtliche Formulierung:³⁷

religione liberare (bzw. *liberari*), d.h.: “von *religio* befreien” (bzw. “befreit werden”).

Cicero bezieht sich dabei vor allem auf das pontifikale Gutachten vom Herbst 57, durch das sein Haus, wie es in *har.* 11 heißt:

omni religione omnibus iudiciis liberata est, d.h.: “mit einstimmigem Urteil von jeglicher *religio* befreit wurde.”

Die sakralrechtlich-technische Bedeutung von *aliquid religione liberare* (oder auch *solvere*) ist: Entsakralisierung, die förmliche Aufhebung der “Heiligkeit”, das *resecreare*.³⁸ Das rituelle Ablösungsopfer wäre das sog. Piacularopfer. An das *expiatio*-Bedeutungsfeld knüpft Cicero nachdrücklich mit verbalem *expiare* an, das ebenfalls technisch ist. In *De haruspicum responso* 11 heißt es zu Anfang (!) des mit der Hausaffäre befaßten Kontextes programmatisch:

primum expiabo religionem aedium mearum

In Übersetzung (die freilich wörtlich nicht sein kann, sondern paraphrasieren muß): “Meine Rede, die darlegen wird, daß am Haus keine *religio* haftet, ist damit zugleich expiatorisch.”³⁹

Aber was bedeutet der bisher noch unübersetzt gebliebene und bekanntlich mehrdeutige *religio*-Begriff?⁴⁰ Die Antwort ergibt sich unmittelbar aus der konkreten palatinischen Rechtssache, die klassischen Modellcharakter für die römische sakralrechtliche *religio*-Haus-Relation hat:

religio ist die religiöse “Bindung”, Auflage und tabuierende Belastung, die infolge des Konsekrationsaktes des Clodius dem Haus anhaftete. Es ist also die “objektive” Bedeutung des *religio*-Begriffs⁴¹ — die *religio loci*. Jeder zum *locus sacer* gewordene Ort war durch *religio* “gebunden”, Resultat des Übergangs vom *ius humanum* zum *ius divinum*. Der Terminus technicus für den Zustand der *religio*-Haftung ist: *religione teneri*. Von dieser religiösen Bindung und Belastung war das Haus ja in der Tat — und darin hat Cicero völlig recht — durch den priesterlichen Pontifikalbescheid im Oktober 57 förmlich “entlastet” und “entbunden” worden (= *liberata est*), in-

dem die *consecratio* wegen der Lex Papiria-Verletzung für ungültig beschieden und geurteilt wurde (*har.* 14), der Platz sei:

sacer non esse, d.h. “nicht heilig”.

Unmißverständlicher als in den zuletzt zitierten antiken Testimonien kann die *prinzipielle* religiöse Differenz zwischen regelrechten *loca sacra* und Privathäusern kaum artikuliert werden.

3. Auf die Clodius-*consecratio* bezieht sich Cicero ferner mit einer terminologischen Variante, die in der hier diskutierten Frage der religiösen Merkmalsbestimmung von Privathäusern (A I) in einem weiteren wichtigen Punkt klären kann. In *De haruspicum responso* 33 wendet sich Cicero in direkter Apostrophe an den anwesenden Clodius und fragt:

tu meam domum religiosam facere potuisti?

In Übersetzung: “Ausgerechnet du hättest mein Haus religiös machen können?”

Auch die Formulierung *domum religiosam facere* meint, wie gesagt, zunächst nichts anderes als das *consecrare*, also den Umwandlungsakt von “profan” in “heilig”, wozu Cicero aus moralisch-charakterlichen Gründen Clodius das Recht absprechen will. Dennoch wird mit der Einführung des *religiosum*-Begriffs für jeden Römer unüberhörbar nuanciert. Denn sakralrechtlich wurde dreifach differenziert, in: *loca sacra*, *loca religiosa* und *loca sancta*.⁴²

*loca religiosa*⁴³ waren — neben den Blitzmalen (*bidentalia*), dem *mundus* u.a. — vor allem die Grabstätten, und zwar vom Moment der Bestattung ab.⁴⁴ Der Terminus technicus ist — wie bei Cicero (!) — *locum religiosum facere*, d.h. “einen Platz religiös machen”⁴⁵. Auch die *loca religiosa* waren tabuierte Plätze, waren *extra commercium*, d.h. dem Privatrechtsverkehr entzogen.⁴⁶ In den Digesten 41,2,30,1 heißt es: *locum religiosum aut sacrum non possumus possidere*, d.h. eine “religiöse” oder “heilige” Stätte kann nicht Eigentum im privatrechtlichen Sinne sein, was auch gilt: *etsi contemnamus religionem et pro privato eum teneamus* (ebd.).

In Konsequenz daraus ergibt sich: das römische Privathaus war auch kein *locus religiosus*,⁴⁷ selbst wenn das Adjektiv gelegentlich hinzutreten und von *domus religiosae* die Rede sein kann, was dann in untechnischem Sinne = *piae* bedeutet, also etwa “fromme Häu-

ser'', d.h. Haushalte mit sorgfältiger Hauskultausübung.⁴⁸ Abermals wird deutlich, wie weitab die in § 2 vorgeführten Hausdefinitionen von römischen Verhältnissen sind. Aber war das *aedificium privatum*, wenn auch kein *locus sacer* oder *locus religiosus*, so doch vielleicht ein *locus sanctus*? Das führt zur Erörterung eines letzten Cicero-Zitats.

4. Nachdem zunächst allein *ex negativo* geklärt werden konnte, was das Haus, religiös verstanden, alles nicht ist, informiert ein Textpassus in *De domo sua* in stringenter Weise nun doch auch darüber, was das historische römische Privathaus *tatsächlich* religiös auswies und kennzeichnete. In § 109 heißt es:

quid est sanctius, quid omni religione munitius quam domus uniuscuiusque civium? hic arae sunt, hic foci, hic di penates, hic sacra, religiones, caerimoniae continentur; hoc perfugium est ita sanctum omnibus, ut inde abripi neminem fas sit.

In Übersetzung (wobei freilich vorerst erneut der *religio*-Begriff, aber auch *sanctius* unübersetzt bleiben muß): "Was ist in höherem Grade ein *sanctum*, was durch jede *religio* geschützter als das Privathaus (*domus*) eines jeden einzelnen Bürgers? Hier gibt es Altäre, hier Herde, hier Hausgötter (*di penates* = Hausgötter schlechthin), hier gibt es Kulte (*sacra*), religiöses Brauchtum (*religiones*, Plural!), rituelle Zeremonien (*caerimoniae*). Hier ist ein für alle so unverletzbarer Zufluchtsort (*perfugium ita sanctum*), daß niemand von dort entfernt werden darf."

Um im Gesamturteil vorzugreifen: es gibt in der antiken Literatur keine eindringlichere, keine präzisere Paraphrase der Religiosität des antiken Hauses. Wiewohl auf knappstem Raum konzentriert, werden fast erschöpfend Wesen und Eigenart, Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der *religio domestica* skizziert. Aber was bedeutet *sanctus, a, um*? Was jetzt *religio* — die beiden Schlüsselbegriffe der Stelle?

Fraglos ist: a) unmöglich richtig ist die Übersetzung von *sanctus* = *sacer* = heilig. Sie stünde im Widerspruch zu Ciceros eigenen Worten und zum römischen *ius sacrum*. Das Privathaus ist — wir sahen es mehrfach — ein *locus profanus*, kein *locus sacer*. Folglich soll, ja muß die *sanctus*-Prädikation auf eine religiöse *Andersartigkeit* verweisen.

Fraglos ist ferner: b) auch der *religio*-Begriff hat jetzt in der Bedeutung entscheidend gewechselt. Wir sahen vorhin: laut Cicero ist jedes Haus in der Regel "frei von *religio*" (*libera religione*). Auch ist

es kein *locus religiosus*. Wie kann es aber dennoch “durch *religio* geschützt” sein?

Die Auflösung der Widersprüche ergibt sich, wenn wir darauf achten, daß nunmehr die Aussagenbereiche vertauscht sind: nicht mehr ist vom religiösen Objekt die Rede, sondern vom Subjekt. In der sechsfachen Substantivreihe des zweiten Satzes, der begründet, wodurch das Haus “geschützt” ist (*munita*), beziehen sich fünf Nominalia, darunter ja auch der Plural *religiones* (!), auf das religiöse Tun des Menschen, d.h. auf Sakralhandlungen und deren Instrumentarien. Wir hören von: Altären, Feuerstellen, Opferakten, Ritualien usw.

Damit ist der Weg frei für die Bedeutungskklärungen: *religio* ist im Sinne späterer Cicero-Definitionen (z.B. der berühmten in *De natura deorum* 2,3,8⁴⁹) = *cultus*, ist damit Oberbegriff zur folgenden Enumeration. In Kultus und Ritus — so Cicero — liegt der “Schutz” eines jeden Hauses, nicht in der “Heiligkeit” häuslicher *religio loci*.

Aber was ist *sanctius*? Daß die Schwierigkeiten größer als bei *religio* sind, demonstrieren die divergierenden Übersetzungsversuche selbst namhafter Latinisten, z.B. Wuilleumier’s “de plus sacré”,⁵⁰ was — wir sahen es erst soeben — unmöglich richtig sein kann, M. Fuhrmanns “unantastbarer”,⁵¹ E. Burcks “nichts Ehrwürdigeres”.⁵²

Aber ist es vielleicht der gesuchte Hinweis auf den *locus sanctus*-Status? Nein, dagegen spricht eindeutig der antike Belegbefund: zwar wurde Stadtmauern und -toren sakralrechtlich das *sanctum esse* mit Partizipation am *ius divinum* attribuiert, wenn auch nur “in gewisser Weise” (*quodam modo*),⁵³ aber nicht Privathäusern, jedenfalls niemals im eigentlichen oder sakralrechtlichen Sinne. Nicht anders ist es, wenn es gelegentlich unscharf von einzelnen Hausteilen heißt, sie seien *sacrata diis*, z.B. Küche, Hausumfriedung.⁵⁴ Dadurch wurde das Haus nicht zum *locus sacer* oder *sanctus*, ganz abgesehen davon, daß es sich nicht um förmliche Konsekrationen handelte. Persius spöttelt einmal (*Sat.* 1, 113) über solche Pseudo-Sakralisierungen, wenn er schreibt: “Kritzele zwei Schlangen an die Wand, und schon ist der Platz heilig” (*pinge duos anguis, pueri, sacer est locus*). Vielmehr blieb das Haus, weil ein *locus privatus*, “an sich” profan. Hingegen hatte auch die sakralrechtliche *sanctitas* das

nullius in bonis esse im Gefolge, d.h. den Übergang zum Divinal-eigentum.⁵⁵

Die *sanctius*-Erklärung folgt aus dem Kontext, vor allem aus der Nachbarschaftsstellung zu *religione munitius* und zum *perfugium sanctum*-Satz, ferner aus (bisher unberücksichtigten) Parallelstellen. Bis zur Evidenz ist sicher, daß der Funktionsbegriff der "rituellen Sicherung" auch das *sanctius*-Prädikat mit einschließt. *sanctius* ist daher fast synonym mit *religione munitius*. Im folgenden (hier nicht mehr zitierten) Satz stehen *sancta* und *religionibus tuta* (!) nebeneinander, was dasselbe meint. In der Tat ist *sanctus* = *tutus* = *munitus* "sicher, geschützt" ja aus Verbindungen wie *lege sanctus*, *sacro sanctus*, *aerarium sanctius* usf. geläufig.⁵⁶ Die Synonymie wird bestätigt durch die Digesten-Definition in 1,8,8: *sanctum est quod ab iniuria hominum defensum atque munitum est*.

Des weiteren klärt der *perfugium sanctum*-Satz: er ist nicht etwa ein Hinweis auf ein örtliches Asylrecht in römischen Privathäusern, was es in Rom bekanntlich nicht gab,⁵⁷ ja auch bei den wenigen dafür genannten Tempelbeispielen nur *quibus consecrationis* (!) *lege concessum est*,⁵⁸ weshalb die Übersetzungen "asile sacré" (Wuilleumier) oder "heiliges Asyl" (Fuhrmann) irreführen und der Satz gerade *nicht* (wie selbst seitens so hervorragender Juristen wie R. von Iherings geschehen⁵⁹) als Testimonium für den "Heiligtum"-Charakter des römischen Hauses mißverstanden werden darf, sondern auch er betont abermals die "Schutzqualität" des Hauses, insofern — wie es in Dig. 2,4,18 heißt — *domus tutissimum cuique refugium atque receptaculum sit*.

Auch hier ist folglich *sanctum* = *tutum* = *munitum* = "sicher, unverletzlich, geschützt", nicht aber "sakral-heilig." Denn es ist kaum zufällig, daß Cicero den sakraltechnischen Terminus *asylum* vermieden und statt dessen, in Übereinstimmung mit juristischer Terminologie, den *perfugium*-Begriff gewählt hat, was entweder auf römische Schutzverhältnisse und Hausrechtsverbindlichkeiten wie das "Gastrecht" (*hospitium*)⁶⁰ und gewisse, im "Hausfrieden" beruhende Schutzbestimmungen zielt⁶¹ oder überhaupt griechische (!) Asylvorstellungen einfließen läßt. Jedenfalls wird von Cicero damit nicht etwa doch noch nachträglich eine *religio loci*, wie sie ja jede örtliche Asylie unbedingt voraussetzt (!),⁶² für das römische Privathaus eingeführt. Sie ist — wir hörten es von Cicero selbst — ausgeschlossen, weil — *domus sunt liberae religione*.

Eine letzte Bestätigung liefert schließlich Macrobius 1,9,2, wo es heißt:

mythici referunt regnante Iano omnium domos religione ac sanctitate fuisse munitas idcircoque ei divinos honores esse decretos et ob merita introitus et exitus aedium eidem consecratos.

In Übersetzung: „Die Mythologen erzählen, daß zur Zeit des Königs Janus die Häuser aller (sc. Bürger) durch *religio* und *sanctitas* geschützt waren (*munitas*) und ihm deswegen göttliche Ehren zuerteilt und wegen seiner Verdienste ihm die Hausein- und -ausgänge geweiht wurden.“

Man sieht: die wörtliche Übereinstimmung beider Texte ist fast vollständig (*sanctius...religione munitus* = *religione ac sanctitate...munitas*). Aber auch nach diesem fast wortgleichen Mythologem waren nicht etwa die Bürgerhäuser „heilig“, selbst nicht in der paradiesischen *aurea aetas*-Zeit des Janus-Saturn,⁶³ sondern sie waren subjektiv „geschützt“ durch die häusliche „rituelle Frömmigkeit“ — ein Topos in Aurea Aetas-Texten.

Als Interpretationsfazit der §§ 2-3 ergibt sich somit: die zu Anfang von § 2 zitierten religions- und fachwissenschaftlichen Definitionen des Hauses als „Heiligtum“ lassen sich für das historische römische Privathaus nicht verifizieren. Sowohl nach späterem klassischem römischem Sakralrecht wie vor allem laut Aussage Ciceros, eines in Sachen Staatsreligion informationsverläßlich-konservativen Zeugen,⁶⁴ beruhte die Religion des römischen Hauses nicht in der örtlichen Sakralität oder „Heiligkeit“ des Hauses (*religio loci*), sondern vielmehr in der Sanktität kraft Ritus und Kultus. Ihr Merkmal ist die lokale Sekurität, bewirkt durch die *religio domestica* des Hauskults, also durch das religiöse Subjekt — den *homo religiosus*.⁶⁵ In sakralrechtlicher Formulierung: das Haus war weder ein *locus sacer* noch ein *locus religiosus* oder *sanctus*, vielmehr, weil *libera religione*, ein *locus profanus*.

Dennoch führten uns bereits diese einschränkenden Korrekturen, die wir — wie die §§ 6-10 zeigen werden — ohne Bedenken auch auf andere mediterrane Religionen werden übertragen dürfen, zugleich mitten ins Zentrum der Hauskultproblematik überhaupt. Denn wenn auch das Haus „an sich“ profan ist (wir erinnern uns noch einmal: nach F. Heiler sollte es „an sich“ heilig sein), so ist es doch zugleich infolge der oft tagtäglichen haus-

kultlichen *caerimoniae* in fast ununterbrochenem Kontakt mit “Heiligem”.⁶⁶

Merkmal des Hauskults, weil sowohl eine a) auf privatem “profanem” Boden wie ja auch b) durch eine “nicht qualifizierte religiöse Gemeinschaft”⁶⁷ praktizierte *religio*, ist folglich eine sehr eigentümliche Mittelstellung — “nell’ambito del sacro o del profano”,⁶⁸ daher nicht frei von Widersprüchen und Paradoxien, fast eine *religio sui generis* und damit eine Religion innerhalb der Religion, mit offensichtlich *anderem*, weil distanzloserem Verhältnis zur Gottheit als die Staatsreligion — man denke etwa an die pompejanischen Latrinen mit Lararien (!)⁶⁹ —, damit mit modifizierten oder eher wohl ursprünglicheren Vorstellungen von “Heiligkeit”, Folge gewiß sowohl der ständigen Intimität, Nähe und des “Wohnens” mit Numina wie auch des extrem hohen Alters des Hauskults. Wir werden dieser Eigenart hauskultlicher *religio* in den folgenden Paragraphen wiederholt begegnen und mehrfach darauf zurückkommen.

§ 4 In nahezu allen historischen antiken Religionen wird bekanntlich geschieden zwischen: a) Polis- oder Staatsreligion einerseits und b) Privat- oder Familienreligion andererseits, in römischer Terminologie: *sacra publica* — *sacra privata*.⁷⁰

Mediterrane Staatsreligionen waren beispielsweise: die ägyptische Religion, zentriert im König als göttlicher Inkarnation oder Gottessohn und privilegierten Priesterklassen, die römische Religion — man denke an Georg Wissowas berühmte Definition: “Die römische Religion ist eine Staatseinrichtung sowohl was die Auswahl der Götter als was die Form ihrer Verehrung anlangt”,⁷¹ die theokratischen Systeme der mesopotamischen Stadtstaaten, vermutlich auch Kretas “hundert” Städte mit Priesterkönigen und weiblicher Priesterschaft, vor allem auch die griechische Polisreligion, von der Martin P. Nilsson gesagt hat: “Staat und Religion waren eines und dasselbe”.⁷²

Daher hat man vom “Parallelismus” zwischen staatlichem und häuslichem Kult gesprochen, wie ja auch vom Parallelismus von Staats- und Hausgewalt,⁷³ oder hat gemeint: “Private worship was a miniature of public worship”.⁷⁴ Wir wollen diesen Parallelismus-Begriff als möglichen Aspekt antiker hauskultlicher *religio* in ihrer Relation zur öffentlich-staatlichen Religion übernehmen (A II).

Andererseits wissen wir, daß — so die Formulierung des Juristen Max Kaser — “die Macht des Staates an der Schwelle des Hauses endete”.⁷⁵ Die *patria potestas* etwa des *paterfamilias* der griechischen oder römischen Kleinfamilie (*familia proprio iure*) war monokratisch und fast total (*ius vitae necisque* u.a.),⁷⁶ auch in Sachen häuslicher Religion. Als laienpriesterlicher Kultvorstand der familiären Hausgenossenschaft amtierte der “Hausvater”, wie neben ihm auch der Haussohn (*filius familias*), in der Kultpraxis souverän, ohne staatliche Reglementierung, “formell vollkommen selbständig”.⁷⁷ Die Funktion der staatlichen Priesterschaften (*sacerdotes publici*) war, beispielsweise, selbst in der römischen Religion im wesentlichen nur konsultativ, d.h. gutachterlich und beratend (mittels sog. *decreta et responsa*).⁷⁸ Auswüchse und Kuriosa dieser Kultaautonomie waren fast unausbleiblich: ab 4. Jh. v. Chr. rückten nicht selten die Hausköche (!) zu “Sachverständigen” im häuslichen Opferritual griechischer Familien auf.⁷⁹

Da zur Selbständigkeit in der rituellen Praxis des Hausalltags auch von Anfang an die Eigenständigkeit in der Verehrung spezieller Familien- oder Gentilnumina hinzukam, war die notwendige religionsgeschichtliche Folge dieser (wie wir es in § 3 nannten) Religion in der Religion, daß es an Stelle des Parallelismus von Haus- und Staatskult immer wieder zu konkurrierenden Spannungen zwischen beiden kam. Wir wollen daher dem Parallelismus-Aspekt (A II) den gegensätzlichen Aspekt des Antagonismus an die Seite stellen (A III).

Kein Geringerer etwa als Platon hat den privaten Hauskult überhaupt abschaffen wollen. Gefahren sah er vor allem in der religiösen Willkür, Magie, Aberglaube und im Anteil der Frau daran. In den *Nomoi* 10,909 d-910 e heißt es:

“Für alle ohne Ausnahme soll folgendes Gesetz gelten:

Niemand darf im eigenen Haus Heiligtümer haben (*mè kektêsthai theón en idiais oikiais hierá*). Falls aber jemand opfern will, soll er zu den öffentlich-staatlichen Heiligtümern (*pròs tà demósia*) gehen, und die Opfergabe soll er Priestern und Priesterinnen aushändigen...Nur in Gemeinschaft mit ihnen soll er beten...”

Platon nahm die Gefahren privater hauskultlicher Religion so ernst, daß er bei mehrfachem Zuwiderhandeln sogar die Todesstrafe wegen “Asebie” vorsah (*Nom.* 10,910 e). Auch Cicero warnt

in *De legibus* 2,19, und seine Bedenken sind die stereotypen Bedenken seitens antiker Staatsreligion:

“Niemand soll für sich allein Götter haben, weder neue noch auswärtige, außer den staatlich (*publice*) eingeführten. Privat zu Hause soll man nur die Götter kultisch verehren, die man nach Brauch von den Vätern (*rite a patribus*) ererbt hat.”

In der Tat waren die antiken Hauskulte eigene religiöse Zellen und Zentren mit eigenen religiösen Familienkulten, Familienfesten usw., in der Formulierung C. W. Westrups zum römischen Hauskult: “Each family constituted a cult community. It had its own gods, its own rites, its own prayers and hymns.”⁸⁰ Cicero selber — wir hörten es im *De domo sua* 109- Zitat in § 3 — hat dieses kultische “Eigenleben” der *religio domestica* ja fast emphatisch bezeugt. Plutarch hat die religiöse Eigenständigkeit der *oikos*-Gemeinschaft bei seiner Definition brüderlicher Verbundenheit klassisch gekennzeichnet: man teilt dieselben Opfer, dieselben väterlichen Hauskulte, dieselbe Grabstelle (*Mor.* 481 d).

Abgesehen von der von Cicero zu Recht gesehenen “Sicherungsfunktion” der antiken *familia* unter einem Dach *per religionem* lag die kaum überschätzbare und eigentliche Bedeutung des Hauskults ja darin, daß er sich sowohl der alltäglichen “kleinen” wie der elementaren “großen” Lebenssituationen, -rhythmen und -krisen annahm: es ist das Haus, in dem sich die mächtigen Zäsuren von Geburt, Tod, Krankheit, Hochzeit ereignen.

Es ist aber auch das Haus, in dem die stets einen “sakralen Charakter” bewahrenden Mahlzeiten stattfinden,⁸¹ die schon bei Hesiod erwähnten regelmäßigen Morgen- und Abendgebete (*Erg.* 338ff.), das tägliche Gebet an den *Lar familiaris* (Plaut. *Aul.* 23f.) nebst dreimal monatlichen Opfern an den Kalenden, Nonen und Iden (Cato, *Agr.* 143,2) zu einem beträchtlichen Teil der Berufsalltag mit typischem Arbeitsbrauchtum (z.B. der Handwerker, Bauern, Kaufleute, Gastwirte usw.),⁸² Ehe und Kindererziehung, letztere — so Platon — mit gewünschter religiöser Unterweisung “schon bei Ammen- und Muttermilch” (*Nom.* 10, 887 d), die rites de passage der Pubertät,⁸³ die zahlreichen periodischen oder jahreszeitlichen Familienfeiertage (*feriae privatae*),⁸⁴ regelmäßige kultische “Reinigungen” nach Trauer-, Geburts-, Kriminalfällen mit Herdlöschung, Zypressen-, Lorbeer-, Ölzweigen, Wasser usw.,⁸⁵ Reise-

antritte und -ankünfte mit üblichen *pro reditu*-Gebeten und -Libationen,⁸⁶ Symposien,⁸⁷ Geburtstagsfeiern (ja auch die allmonatlichen der Hauskultgottheiten⁸⁸) u.v.a.

Die Folge davon ist ein angesichts der gewöhnlichen Unterschätzung des Hauskults vermutlich überraschender weiterer Aspekt (A IV): nicht nur war der antike Hauskult nach der glücklichen Formulierung von H. J. Rose "part of daily life, as natural as eating and drinking",⁸⁹ sondern mehr noch: gerade im Hauskult trifft man auf die praktizierte, die *lebendige* antike Religiosität, wobei der für uns geringere Bekanntheitsgrad Ursache nur im Fehlen von Aufzeichnungen und *commentarii* familiär-privater *sacra* hat.⁹⁰

Das gilt für die griechische Religion, bei der ja schon beim einzelnen attischen Demos die Kulte "a far more regular and personal part of his religious life than the occasional trips to Athens for the grand festivals" ausmachten.⁹¹ Man denke allein etwa an die von Theopomp referierte Auskunft des delphischen Orakels, wer "am besten die Götter verehere".⁹² Weit mehr aber noch für die römische. Ich will summarisch vier der auffälligsten Merkmale nennen:

1. Gerade im Hauskult ist genuin römische *religio* faßbar, in der zutreffenden Formulierung Nilssons: "the domestic religion was the most Roman of all cults of the Roman religion."⁹³

2. Im Haus-, nicht im Staatskult entfaltete sich die eigentliche rituelle Aktivität, mit dem Urteil Wissowas: "Der einzelne Bürger... genügt seinen laufenden Pflichten gegen die Gottheit innerhalb seines Eigentums."⁹⁴

3. Der Hauskult war ubiquitär wie auch nicht annähernd ein anderer römischer Kult, so daß bekanntlich die Laren und Penaten Appellativnamen für das Haus werden konnten und es noch in christlicher Polemik des späten vierten Jahrhunderts n. Chr. hieß: *nullusque (sic!) fuerit locus, qui non idololatriae sordibus inquinatus sit, in tantum ut post fores domorum idola ponerent, quos domesticos appellant Lares*.⁹⁵

4. Der starke ahnenkultliche Einschlag,⁹⁶ der ohne Analogie im griechischen Hauskult ist. Mit allen diesen (und weiteren) Merkmalen hat in der Tat die römische *religio domestica* eine "verblüffende Parallele" sonst nur noch im japanischen Hauskult⁹⁷ oder in den nordasiatisch-finnisch-ugrischen Hauskulten.⁹⁸

§ 5 Die Hausfunktion als autarke kultische Zelle und "Kraftfeld" betraf dabei gleichermaßen das isoliert gelegene ländliche Anwesen, also den Bauern- oder Gutshof — Horazens Carmen 3,23 ist hierzu poetisches Hauskult-Testimonium —, wie das städtische Privathaus. Die Pompeji-Ausgrabungen haben es mit einer archäologischen Belegfülle erwiesen, die weit über die sporadischen literarischen Zeugnisse hinausgeht.

Mehr als 500 Lararien, d.h. die spezifisch römische kleine Hauskapelle (*sacrarium*) als Nischen-Typus, als Aedicula, Pseudo-Aedicula oder als Wandbild, hat George K. Boyce in seinem "Corpus of the Lararia of Pompeii" katalogisieren können.⁹⁹ Weitere 66 pompejanische Lararien-Neufunde hat kürzlich David G. Orr im Corpus A seiner Dissertation vorgestellt, während im Corpus B erstmals systematisch die Herculaneum-Lararien erfaßt wurden (insgesamt 46).¹⁰⁰ Lararien-Belege von Ostia, Campanien und den Provinzen sind jüngst hinzugekommen.¹⁰¹

Wenngleich seltener als die Lararien, so sind *religionshistorisch* die separaten Hauskultzimmer (*sacella*) fast noch interessanter,¹⁰² weil sie — wie wir ab § 7 ff. sehen werden — in uralter, bereits neolithisch-bronzezeitlicher mediterraner Hauskulttradition stehen. So ist, beispielsweise, der in einer pompejanischen *caupona* (Gastwirtschaft) freigelegte rechteckige, fensterlose und mit niedrigen Wandbänken und Altar versehene Hauskultraum wie ein "survival" der minoischen "bench-sanctuaries" (Reg. VI 1,1 = Boyce Nr. 132 = Orr, p. 92f.), wie ja auch die Schlange, häufigstes pompejanisches hauskultliches Sinnbild auf Lararien und Genius-, *genius loci*- und Larenrepräsentation,¹⁰³ bereits minoisch-griechischer "guardian of the house" war.¹⁰⁴

Diese separaten *sacella* konnten auch im Garten lokalisiert sein, z.B. das *sacellum* des Weinhändlers C. Caesius Restitutus, hier mit Nischen-Lararium und Altar davor,¹⁰⁵ oder im Peristylgarten der Casa dell'Ancora (Reg. VI 10,7), der so "den Charakter eines heiligen Bezirks" erhielt.¹⁰⁶ Sie finden sich ebenso, und zwar ein- oder zweiräumig, in Villen der Provinzen, z.B. in Pannonien,¹⁰⁷ wo bei den Hauskultgöttern einer Villa in Nagydém nachweisbar ist, daß sie "der italienische Kolonist noch aus der Heimat mitgebracht haben" muß,¹⁰⁸ also "mitgewanderte" *di domestici* waren.

Wichtig sind ferner die bildlichen Selbstdarstellungen hauskultli-

cher Opferritualien, weil bei ihnen szenisch oft bis ins kultische Detail die Opferakte der *religio domestica* anschaulich werden: z.B. das fünfköpfige Familiensacrum auf dem Küchen-Lararium in Reg. VII 4,20¹⁰⁹ — ein Genius-Opfer mit Rollenverteilung in *camilus* (Opferknabe), hier vermutlich der Haussohn (*filius familias*), *victimarius* (mit dem Opfertier auf der Schulter) und *tibicen* (Flötenspieler), oder die 16-köpfige (!) Opferprozession auf dem Küchen-Lararium in Reg. I 13,2¹¹⁰ — ein Laren-Opfer mit den zentralen Opferpersonen von *pater* und *mater familias* und 14 weiteren *familia*-Mitgliedern.

Pompeji, eine “fromme Stadt”,¹¹¹ wo in “keinem Haus” das Lararium fehlen durfte,¹¹² überdies noch mit dem Haustypus der “alten *domus*, des Familienhauses”,¹¹³ bestätigt folglich unser Urteil in § 4 über die überragende Bedeutung römischer *religio domestica*. Robert Etienne folgerte: “Über alle offiziellen Kultformen hinaus... ist die persönliche Religiosität der Pompejaner am wichtigsten gewesen.”¹¹⁴

Dasselbe Bild einer imponierenden Selbstverständlichkeit des Hauskults ergab sich nach den Ausgrabungsbefunden für die römische Kolonie auf Delos. Hier hatte Marcel Bulard das archäologische Material monographisch aufgearbeitet.¹¹⁵ Aus dem griechischen Raum wären vor allem die Olynthos-Ausgrabungen zu nennen.¹¹⁶ Da es das Olynthos des 5./4. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. ist, ist man annähernd zeitgleich mit Platons so rigorosem, so ungriechischem Hauskultverdikt. Über 40 Hausaltäre wurden gefunden, davon 14 Innenhof-Altäre in griechischen Häusern vom Pastas-Typus. Ebenfalls über 40 Hausaltäre ergaben die Thera-Ausgrabungen, davon 23 mit Inschriften.¹¹⁷ Weitere Altarbelege hat Nilsson zusammengestellt.¹¹⁸ Über ihre Typik hat Constantine G. Yavis referiert.¹¹⁹ Auch für den griechischen Hauskult gilt: “A certain cult was characteristic of a certain family”.¹²⁰

Aber um auf Ciceros in § 4 erwähntes *De legibus* 2,19-Zitat zurückzukommen: wenn seitens der antiken Staatsreligion für den Hauskult der Kult der “von den Vätern ererbten Götter” gefordert wird, wer waren diese *di patrii* oder *theoi patrôoi*, wie sie analog im griechischen Hauskult hießen? Wie weit reichen sie als “väterliche”, also als seit Generationen vererbte Gottheiten, zeitlich zurück? Das leitet im zweiten Untersuchungsteil über zu vier Exkur-

sparagraphen, die a) konzentrierte Überblicke über eine Reihe vor- und frühgeschichtlicher mediterraner Hauskulte geben und b) damit zugleich einen weiteren Aspekt (A V) verdeutlichen werden: den des extrem hohen Alters des Hauskults, und zwar in den ethnisch verschiedensten mediterranen Kulturen. Überall gehört hier gerade der Hauskult zu einem besonders frühen und ursprünglichen Kultstratum.

§ 6 Daß mediterrane Hauskulte bis ins Frühneolithikum des siebenten Jahrtausends v. Chr. datierbar und damit so früh wie die Anfänge agrarisch-seßhafter Lebensform überhaupt sind, ist durch die nahöstlichen Ausgrabungsbefunde von Jericho B, Munhata, Beidha und Tell Ramad evident.¹²¹ Nachgewiesen sind:

1. Nischensakrarien, 2. häuslicher Ahnenkult in Form von zu Porträtköpfen stilisierten Totenschädeln, 3. Hausbestattung in Verbindung mit dem "festen Bestattungsritus" der Schädelabtrennung.

Kathleen Kenyon, die verdienstvolle Ausgräberin, kommentierte den Fund eines Schädels eines älteren Mannes in Jericho B, der unter dem Estrich in einem Mauerwinkel "sorgfältig aufgerichtet" stand: "Offenbar wollte man seinen Geist im Haus festhalten, damit seine Weisheit den Bewohnern zugute käme."¹²²

Ahnenkult ist — wie man gesagt hat — "la caractéristique la plus évidente et la plus nouvelle de la religion du septième millénaire",¹²³ und die zitierten nahöstlichen frühneolithischen Belege sind für uns die zeitlich frühesten Nachweise für Haus- als Ahnenkult. Dennoch wäre jede einseitig-monokausale Ableitung der *religio domestica* vom Ahnenkult, wie oft geschehen, abwegig. Der ahnenkultliche Hauskult ist ein, aber eben doch nur *ein* religiöser "Elementargedanke" (und damit Aspekt: A VI) in Verbindung mit dem Haus. Um es mit römischen Begriffen zu formulieren: *di parentes* und *di patrii* sind heterogene religiöse Konzeptionen.¹²⁴ Daß die "väterlichen" Hausgötter nicht identisch mit den "elterlichen" sind, auch älter als diese sein können, haben Untersuchungen zu den paläoasiatischen und finnisch-ugrischen Hauskulten erwiesen,¹²⁵ deren Entwicklung klassisch-modellhaft verläuft. Religiös so unterschiedliche Elemente verbinden sich wie: Feuer- und Herdverehrung, der Naturorteigner (= Erdbodenmacht),

Familien-, Sippen-, Stammes-, Naturgottheiten, Ahnenkult, selbst Schamanistisches. Insofern ist der Hauskult offensichtlich *von Anfang an* und weltweit eine "komplexe Erscheinung",¹²⁶ ja *auch* bereits in Jericho B,¹²⁷ weshalb wir den Komplexitätsbegriff als weiteren hauskultlichen Aspekt (A VII) zuordnen wollen.

§ 7 Gleichfalls noch ins 7./6. Jahrtausend v. Chr. datiert die 1958 von James Mellaart entdeckte jungsteinzeitliche Terrassenstadt Çatal Hüyük im anatolischen Hochland (ca. 6800-5700 v. Chr.). Bei insgesamt 139 wabenförmig ineinanderverschachtelten Raumeinheiten differenzierte Mellaart 40 Kulträume.¹²⁸ Für unsere Fragestellung ist relevant, daß diese Kulträume zwar: a) jeweils Separatzimmer waren (also vom *sacellum*-Typus), b) sich aber baulich sonst in nichts von den Wohnräumen unterschieden, auch die gleichen Einbauelemente wie Plattform, Bank, Herd enthielten (die kulträumliche Ausstaffierung erfolgte durch Ornamentik und Gegenstände wie Gipsreliefs, Bukranien, Statuetten, Wandmalerei usf.), ferner c) wie die Wohnräume generationenlang (!) als Familiengrabstätte benutzt wurden.

Religion muß sich folglich in Çatal Hüyük im wesentlichen im *Häuslichen* abgewickelt haben,¹²⁹ und zwar in einem auffällig *undifferenzierten* Modus: wie die Lebenden mit den Toten zusammenwohnten, so mit den Göttern — nur durch dünne Lehmziegelwände geschieden. Wurden damit die Wohnräume sakralisiert? Oder, umgekehrt, die Kulträume profaniert? Oder zeichnet sich nicht vielmehr *bereits* im prähistorisch-neolithischen Hauskult ein *Tertium* ab, eine besondere Konzeption des Religiösen: die distanzlose "Symbiose" von Mensch und Numen im Umfeld des Hauses?

Wir sehen: es ist die schon am Ende des § 3 skizzierte *grundsätzliche* Problematik. Sie stellt sich so a) nur für die hauskultliche Religion, ist b) prinzipiell unabhängig von den historisch wechselnden hauskultlichen Religionsarten und c) Merkmal der *religio domestica* durch die Jahrtausende hindurch — bis hin zum "Herrgottswinkel" heutiger Wohnstuben, scheint freilich nirgends eindringlicher als in Çatal Hüyük (Aspekt VIII). Denn hier ist das In-eins von Vegetations-, Toten-, Geburts-, Wiedergeburtskult,¹³⁰ zentriert in der Magna Mater-Gestalt und in Verbindung mit Hausbestattung und Schädelkult, *innerhalb* des Wohnareals, damit *als* Hauskult, singulär.

Die versuchte Ableitung vom anatolischen Kulthöhlenkult¹³¹ scheint indessen unwahrscheinlich. Eher sind direkte Zusammenhänge teils mit dem im Frühneolithikum ja erstmals "entdeckten" Hausfaktor als Lebens-, Arbeits- und nicht zuletzt als Vorratsraum vermutbar — auch die Kultzimmer (!) dienten als "store rooms for produce or granaries",¹³² was uralte Hauskultparallelen hat (z.B. Zeus *Ktesios* oder die *di penates* als "protectors of the stores of the household",¹³³ teils mit dem religiösen "Weltbild" der neuen agrarischen Kulturstufe.¹³⁴

Neolithisch ist die Haussymbolik als *imago mundi*,¹³⁵ und Carl Hentze hat — ausgehend von der Haussymbolik der neolithisch-bronzezeitlichen ostasiatischen Totenhausurnen und den ihr zugrundeliegenden zyklisch-ahnenkultlichen Vorstellungen — vom "Haus als Weltort der Seele" gesprochen.¹³⁶ Abgesehen von der bereits überraschend entwickelten Magna Mater-Theologie¹³⁷ und den Anatolien mit dem neolithischen Palästina verbindenden Schädelkulten,¹³⁸ sind in Çatal Hüyük typische agrarkulturlich-religiöse Vorstellungen allein schon durch den Bestattungsmodus vorauszusetzen: die Toten lagen direkt unterhalb der Fußböden der Wohntrakte und sogar der Schlafpodeste (!). Lebende und Tote waren folglich *gemeinsam* Partizipanten des "einen einzigen, überzeitlichen Sozialorganismus",¹³⁹ und zwar *innerhalb* des schützenden Umfeldes der Hausarchitektur.

§ 8 Auch der minoische Hauskult ist so früh wie die Anfänge entwickelterer Siedlungsformen auf Kreta. Die Nachweise ergaben jüngst die Ausgrabungen von Myrtos (Fournou Korifi), einer süd-kretischen Siedlung des Frühminoikums II A und B (2600-2200 v. Chr.).¹⁴⁰

Da Charakteristikum des minoischen Hauskults von FM II an ebenfalls die Separatzimmeranlage (*sacellum*) ist, liegt es nahe, ihn *zusammen* mit dem rechteckig-vielräumigen Grundrißtyp an die anatolische Kulturkomponente Kretas¹⁴¹ anzuschließen. Die Ableitung vom minoischen Kulthöhlenkult¹⁴² ist — wie schon im Fall Çatal Hüyüks — verfehlt. Wie in Çatal Hüyük oder in Jericho B ist der Hauskult mit den religiösen Bedürfnissen der Siedlung oder des Einzelhauses identisch und hat hier seinen Ursprung.¹⁴³

Der minoische Hauskult, dessen reiches archäologisches Mate-

rial kürzlich erstmals in der amerikanischen Dissertation von Geraldine Cornelia Gesell systematisch aufgearbeitet wurde,¹⁴⁴ ist aus zwei Gründen von besonderem religionshistorischem Interesse:

1. wegen des bekannten Einflusses auf die mykenische und damit auch griechische Religion — man denke etwa an Nilssons Nachweis, daß Athena aus der mit der Hausschlange assoziierten minoischen Haus- und Palastgöttin hervorging,¹⁴⁵ und ähnlich ist jetzt die frühminoische Hausgöttin von Myrtos als “Vorläuferin” der Athena Ergane verstanden worden,¹⁴⁶

2. weil die minoische Religion mit ihren Berg-, Höhlen-, Baum-, Quellenkulten einerseits entschiedene Religion des “Draußen” und Naturreligion, andererseits entschiedene *hauskultliche* Religion war.¹⁴⁷ Auch sie wurde mit dem japanischen Hauskult verglichen.¹⁴⁸

Wie in Çatal Hüyük sind die minoischen Hauskultgottheiten weiblich.¹⁴⁹ Ebenso begegnen die verschiedenen Magna Mater-Aspekte der Fruchtbarkeits-, Geburts-, Erd-, Himmelsgöttin. Doch fehlt gänzlich der thanatisch-ahnenkultliche Einschlag Çatal Hüyüks. Auch sind schon ab FM II bestimmte hauskultliche Funktionsspezialisierungen anders, so z.B. in Myrtos (zuständig für Wasserversorgung, Töpferei, Weberei).¹⁵⁰ Heilige Tiere sind Schlange und Taube, Kultsymbole: Doppelaxt, die “horns of consecration”, Kultknoten, Solar- und Lunarsymbole. In der Tat war, wie Nilsson angenommen hatte, die Schlangengöttin spezielle Hauskultgöttin, spätestens seit MM III.¹⁵¹ Die Gleichung *di domestici* = *di patrii* (d.h. genuine und heimatliche) ist für den minoischen Hauskult sicher, ebenso der frühestmögliche Entstehungshorizont des Hauskults. Er ist sogar noch früher als der Bergkult (ab MM I, ca. 2000 v. Chr.),¹⁵² vermutlich daher ein bereits “mitgewanderter” Kult anatolischer Einwanderer im ausgehenden Neolithikum.

Abgesehen von den Palastinnenhöfen¹⁵³ lassen sich architektonisch-typologisch die folgenden drei Arten minoischer Hauskulträume unterscheiden:¹⁵⁴

1. Das “bench-sanctuary”¹⁵⁵: ein rechteckiges Zimmer mit einer niedrigen Bank (ca. 60 cm) als Votivablage. Berühmtestes Beispiel ist das Doppelaxt-Heiligtum im Knossos-Palast (Gesell Nr. 36 Abb. 20). Es ist schon ab FM II nachweisbar, so in Myrtos (Raum

92), wo es bereits — wie später öfter — mit einem kleinen Vorraum zur Deponierung von Opfergefäßen verbunden ist (Raum 91), bleibt die ganze Zeit hindurch minoischer hauskultlicher Standardraum und “survives in the earliest Greek temples of Iron Age Crete”.¹⁵⁶

2. Das “lustral basin”: ein durch abwärts führende Treppen erreichbarer Raum für vermutlich kathartische Waschungen. Diese Bassins, seit MM I zunächst in den Palästen entstanden, sind sonst nur noch in größeren Palastvillen nachweisbar.

3. Die “pillar crypts”: kleine, sehr düstere Gewölberäume mit ein bis drei Pfeilern in Verbindung mit unmittelbar darüber befindlichen Pfeilerräumen. Kultindizien sind Libationsrinnen, Doppelaxtbasen u.a., doch ist die religiöse Funktion (ob evtl. Pfeilerkult oder Apotropaia usf.) umstritten.¹⁵⁷

In der Forschung werden die kretischen Paläste teils “als Ganzes heilig” klassifiziert,¹⁵⁸ teils überhaupt mit “Heiligtümern” identifiziert (“in Wirklichkeit Heiligtümer”),¹⁵⁹ oder es heißt abschwächender: “Fast der ganze Palast (sc. Knossos) war heilig”.¹⁶⁰

Aber *wenn* zur Begründung dieser “sakralen Natur” der Paläste die “Hauskapellen” angeführt werden,¹⁶¹ wird man dem Urteil schwerlich folgen wollen, allein schon deshalb nicht, weil ja von Anfang an das Kultraumprinzip in Palästen und Privathäusern gleich ist. Jedes Privathaus mit Hauskapelle wäre demnach ebenfalls “heilig” gewesen — eine nicht nachvollziehbare Vorstellung.

Auch ist gerade auffällig, daß die *sacella* klein, oft winzig waren — das Doppelaxt-Heiligtum im Knossos-Palast maß nur 1,50 mal 1,50 m! Überdies sind sie — wie in Çatal Hüyük — architektonisch in nichts von den Wohn- oder Vorratsräumen unterschieden¹⁶² und liegen, abgesehen vom Knossos-Palast, nicht zentral, sondern abseits in Seitentrakten, mit Zugang zu den Wohn- und Alltagsräumen. Sicher ist ferner, daß die “lustral basins” in den Privatvillen zugleich sakral *und* profan nutzbar waren.¹⁶³ All das spricht kaum dafür, daß die minoischen *sacella* einen Palast- oder Hauskomplex als *ganzen* hätten “heiligen” können oder auch nur sollen.

Lehrreich ist hier bereits Myrtos mit ein oder (wenn man den “shrine store” hinzurechnet) zwei “Kultzimmern” bei insgesamt

ca. 100 Raumeinheiten, aber nicht anders, beispielsweise, noch das späminoische bäuerliche Privathaus von Katsamba (Gesell Nr. 27 Abb.10, SM III B). Es ist ein einzelliges Haus, das zur Straße hin eine separate dreieckige Kultkammer in der Größe von 1,90 mal 2,60 m hatte. Verehrt wurde die minoische Haus- und Schlangengöttin. Wurde dieses Privatgehöft *durch* das 1,90 mal 2,60-Dreieck zum *locus sacer*? Sicherlich nicht. Vielmehr ist es das von Çatal Hüyük bekannte hauskultliche Prinzip der "Wand-an-Wand-Wohngemeinschaft" von Mensch und Hausnumen. Da es, wie gesagt, auf Kreta gleichermaßen für Privathaus und Palastanlage gegolten hat, können die Paläste durch die Kultzimmer *nicht* sakrierbar gewesen sein.

Man erkennt hier sehr klar die religiöse *differentia specifica* zu den minoischen Naturheiligtümern: für sie gilt das von Martin P. Nilsson für die antiken Religionen formulierte Gesetz, daß "Heiligkeit an der Stätte selbst haftet".¹⁶⁴ Sie waren "an sich" numinos, eigentliche *loca sacra*, Hierophanie-Plätze im Sinne Mircea Eliades,¹⁶⁵ daher Szenarium der minoischen Epiphanie-Darstellungen,¹⁶⁶ daher die Umfriedungen der minoischen Berg- und Baumheiligtümer, die sie als *témenos* absondern und zu den typischen bronzzeitlichen "sacred enclosures" im Mittelmeerraum stellen.¹⁶⁷

Hingegen ist *auch* für den minoischen Hauskult der (bereits im Çatal Hüyük-§ 7 herausgearbeitete) Aspekt der prinzipiellen *Distanzlosigkeit* das typische Merkmal (A VIII). Auch hier, freilich in der minoischen Religion offensichtlich nur hier — im Hausumfeld, ist das Verhältnis zwischen sakral und profan diffus. Doch ist der Aspekt der Distanzlosigkeit (A VIII) noch handgreiflicher im mykenischen Hauskult, auf den wir im letzten Exkursparagrafen (§ 9) kurz eingehen wollen.

§ 9 In der mykenischen Religion sind trotz der fragmentarischen Überlieferung die folgenden zwei Hauskultarten erkennbar:¹⁶⁸ 1. der königliche Hauskult im Megaron der Paläste, 2. der private Hauskult. In beiden Hauskulten ist das minoische *sacellum* (Separatkultzimmer) nicht aufgenommen und weitergeführt worden.

Im großen Megaron, dem langrechteckigen Haupt- und Repräsentationsraum der mykenischen Paläste von Mykene, Pylos und

Tiryns,¹⁶⁹ war der riesige feststehende Rundherd,¹⁷⁰ dem Thronszitz gegenüberliegend, zwar einerseits “in sich ein ritueller Mittelpunkt”,¹⁷¹ und “im Angesicht des heiligen Herdfeuers zelebrierte der König als das Oberhaupt seiner Sippe die Riten eines alten Hauskults”,¹⁷² aber andererseits war der Megaron-Herd zugleich das Zentrum der gemeinsamen Mahlzeiten im Palast.¹⁷³ Es ist folglich dieselbe *Doppelfunktion* von alltäglicher profaner und sakraler Herd- und Hauptraumnutzung wie beim griechischen Herd- und Odysseushaus der geometrischen Zeit, das “in seiner ambivalenten Funktion zwischen kultischer Opferstätte und der Behausung einer Männergemeinschaft” steht.¹⁷⁴ Der Hauskult der mykenischen Könige ist daher nicht, wie Nilsson urteilte, “im Prinzip minoisch”,¹⁷⁵ vielmehr im Prinzip mykenisch, und zwar trotz Verehrung minoischer weiblicher Hausgottheiten.

Anders als auf Kreta ist überdies, daß nach Ausweis der jüngsten Ausgrabungsbefunde vom Westhang der Akropolis von Mykene sich hier das Kultzentrum nicht, wie früher angenommen, im Palast, sondern außerhalb in mehreren tempelähnlichen Sakralgebäuden befand (sog. Tsountas-Haus, Haus der Idole und Fresken).¹⁷⁶ Voraussetzbar ist demnach eine Verlagerung von wesentlichen Teilen der *sacra* im Palast nach außen in freistehend-unabhängige Sakralgebäude, wo auch die Priesterschaft wohnte, damit eine *Trennung* von Haus- und öffentlichem Kult. Zweifelsfrei ist jetzt ferner, daß die mykenischen Paläste nicht “heilig” waren.¹⁷⁷

Die hauskultliche Praxis privater mykenischer Haushalte zeigen die Ausgrabungen von Berbati und Asine in der Argolis (SH III C, ca. 1200 v. Chr.): in Asine befand sich in Haus G in der Nordecke der großen Haupthalle (Raum 32) eine niedrige Steinbank von 57 cm Höhe, auf der Votivgegenstände deponiert waren, darunter sechs Terrakottastatuetten.¹⁷⁸ Die gleichen Bankablagen nebst deponierten Votiven entdeckte man in Berbati.¹⁷⁹ Man wird das rituelle Brauchtum für mykenische Privathaushalte verallgemeinern dürfen.¹⁸⁰

In ihm sind minoische und mykenische Hauskulttradition z.T. klar trennbar: die Bankablage ist das minoische “bench-sanctuary”, nicht minoisch hingegen der Platz der Aufstellung, nämlich in Wohnräumen. Darin ist er Vorläufer der späteren trans-

portablen griechischen Nischenaltäre,¹⁸¹ der sog. Nischengötter (*theoi mychioi*) und überhaupt des Nischensakrariums.

Die Fusion von minoischem und mykenischem Hauskult reflektieren gleichfalls die Asine-Statuetten: der Kopf der "Potnia", der "Herrin" dieses Hauskults,¹⁸² und ebenso die Adorantenfiguren¹⁸³ sind zwar lokale mykenische Werkstättenarbeit, gehen aber auf minoische Hauskultvorbilder zurück.¹⁸⁴ Mykenisch ist wiederum, daß das typische heilige Sinnbild minoischer Religion auch im Hauskult hier fehlt: das Doppelaxtzeichen.¹⁸⁵

Religionshistorisch am bedeutungsvollsten ist indessen der prinzipielle mykenische Verzicht auf Übernahme des minoischen Separatkultzimmers (*sacellum*), der ja gleichermaßen für den Palast- und den privaten Hauskult gilt. Dadurch verschärft sich zum einen der (in § 8 diskutierte) Aspekt der Distanzlosigkeit (A VIII), zum anderen resultiert daraus, daß im mykenischen Hauskult der Herd in den kultischen Mittelpunkt rückt, richtiger wohl: bleibt — so im Megaron der Paläste, aber nicht anders vermutlich im Privathaus (Aspekt IX). Wenn später im geometrischen Herdhaus und im klassischen griechischen Hauskult der Herd "the center of the household cult" war,¹⁸⁶ so ist es *mykenisches* Erbe. Der Herd ist im minoischen Hauskult bedeutungslos. Alle drei Arten minoischer Hauskulträume sind herdlos.¹⁸⁷

Wenn aber der mykenische Hauskult in seiner Herdzentrierung nicht minoisch ist, sondern bereits "from times immemorial"¹⁸⁸ datiert, trifft man *auch* in der mykenischen Religion erneut gerade im Hauskult auf ein *ältestes* religiöses Stratum. Als Fazit der Exkursparagrafen 6-9 ergibt sich damit eine nachdrückliche Verifizierung des hauskultlichen Aspekts V:

Der Hauskult gehört fraglos zu den ältesten mediterranen Kulturen überhaupt. Im kleinasiatisch-vorderorientalischen Raum ist er so früh belegbar wie die beiden "ältesten Städte der Welt",¹⁸⁹ Jericho B und Çatal Hüyük, ebenso dann aber in Hacilar VI, Beycesultan, Ur usw.¹⁹⁰ Auf Kreta sind nur die neolithischen Toten- und Höhlenkulte noch früher. In der mykenischen Religion geht der Hauskult minoischer Einflußnahme noch voraus. Er ist daher so früh voraussetzbar wie die erste Sesshaftigkeit griechischer Einwanderer in der Ägäis und entsteht hier entweder zusammen mit der Übernahme vorgriechisch-ägäischer Hausformen, z.B. der mega-

ronähnlichen mit dem Herd im Hauptraum,¹⁹¹ vergleichbar darin dem hethitischen Herdkult, der den hattischen Herdkult übernahm,¹⁹² oder er ist ein bereits “mitgewanderter” Kult,¹⁹³ damit indoeuropäischen Ursprungs,¹⁹⁴ vergleichbar dann etwa der so einseitig haus- und herdkultlich orientierten frühindisch-vedischen Religion mit dem Rundherd “Feuer des Hausherrn” (*Garhaparya*),¹⁹⁵ dem frühiranischen Haus- und Feuerkult, auch hier mit dem häuslichen Rundherd,¹⁹⁶ wozu jetzt die neuentdeckte neolithisch-indoiranische Dsheitun-Kultur in Südturkmenien (Pessedshik-tepe) mit so auffälliger Parallele im Feuerkult (Trennung in runde und rechteckige Feuerherde!)¹⁹⁷ oder die proto-indoeuropäische Kurgan-Kultur am Schwarzen Meer mit der Verehrung des Feuers “as a holy element”¹⁹⁸ zu stellen sind, dem skythischen Hauskult mit der Herdgöttin Tabiti-Hestia¹⁹⁹ usf.

§ 10 Indem für die mykenische Zeit das Faktum hauskultlicher Religion gesichert ist, ist damit bereits zu einem Teil für die griechische Religion die am Ende von § 5 aufgeworfene Frage nach Herkunft und Alter der hauskultlichen *theoi patrôoi* beantwortet. Weitere Nachweise geben dann die literarischen Belege, auf die wir in den beiden abschließenden Paragraphen in aller Kürze eingehen wollen.

Auch sie sind: 1. so früh wie möglich, d.h. homerisch, 2. geben nun erstmals Auskunft, wer diese *di domestici* im einzelnen waren. Es sind vor allem Zeus, der “mitgewanderte” indoeuropäische Gott, und zwar in mehrfacher Differenzierung: als *herkeios*, *ephéstios*, *ktésios*, *meilichios-phílios*, *kataibátes*,²⁰⁰ ferner die (ebenfalls “mitgewanderten”) Dioskuren im königlichen Hauskult Spartas,²⁰¹ aber später auch noch z.B. in pompejanischen Hauskulten²⁰² (sie verschmolzen früh in Italien mit den römischen Penaten²⁰³), dann in klassisch-hellenistischer Zeit auch Agathos Daimon.²⁰⁴

Hiervon ist Zeus *herkeios* (auf den wir uns aus Raumgründen beschränken wollen) schon homerisch: sein Altar stand in den Palasthöfen des Odysseus (*Od.* 22,334f.) und des Peleus (*Il.* 11,772f.). Die adjektivische Kultepiklese *herkeios* (zu *hérkos*: Umfriedung, Zaun, Mauer) kennzeichnet ihn als “Gehöftsgott”, womit sich der samaitisch-lettische “Gehöftsherr” (*dimstipats*) und der in § 1 erwähnte russische *domovoi* vergleichen lassen.²⁰⁵ Weitere Epiklesen charakterisieren ihn als typischen Hauskultgott:

Er ist seit den Joniern (Hes.s.v.), Herodot (1,44), Sophokles (*Ai.* 492): *hestiâchos*, *epístios*, *ephéstios*, d.h. ein "Herdgott", doch ist die Herd- (= Hestia-) Relation ebenfalls schon homerisch,²⁰⁶ seit Aischylos (*Hik.* 27): *oikophýlax*, d.h. ein "Hauswächter", wozu die verwandten Epitheta *oikourós*, *oikônax* = "Hausherr" zu stellen sind.²⁰⁷ Inschriftlich wird er mit Zeus *ktésios* verbunden,²⁰⁸ der die nächststverwandte hauskultliche Zeusgestalt ist: er schützt die Vorratskammer (*tamieíon*), wo er in Schlangengestalt verehrt wird und Panspermieopfer erhält.²⁰⁹

Inschriftlich ist ferner die Epithetareihung: Zeus *herkeíos patrôos*.²¹⁰ Damit gehört er zur von uns gesuchten Klasse der "von den Vätern ererben", d.h. genuinen und heimatlichen Gottheiten. Diese "Vater"-Relation wird noch gesteigert in der *propátor*-Epiklese, d.h. "Groß-, Vor-, Stammvater".²¹¹ Gerade auch die genealogische "Stammvater"-Beziehung innerhalb von Familien-, Sippen-, Stammesverbänden ist typische Hauskultgottprädikation.²¹²

Analog zum römischen Penaten- und Larenkult war der attische Zeus *herkeíos*-Kult in einem solchen Grade verbindlich, daß bei der Eignungsprüfung (Dokimasie) athenischer Beamter der Bewerber gefragt wurde, "ob er einen Zeus *herkeíos* habe" (Aristot. *Ath. pol.* 55,3). Sein Kult war folglich Legitimationsnachweis des athenischen Bürgers wie Name und Demos. Daher ist sein Altar für "jedes bürgerliche Hauswesen voranzusetzen".²¹³

Doch war die Zeus *herkeíos*-Verehrung nicht aufs Attische beschränkt, sondern offensichtlich "gemeingriechisch".²¹⁴ Auch gibt es mykenische Zeitindizien: Zeus *herkeíos*-Altäre im Oinomaos-Haus in Olympia (Paus. 5,14,7), im Pandroseion der athenischen Akropolis unter dem heiligen Ölbaum der Athena (Philochoros, FGrH 328 F 67), im Priamos-Palast in Troja (Ep.Gr.Fragm. I Kinkel, p. 49; Paus. 10,27,2), wo dann noch Alexander opferte (Arrian. *an.* 1,11,8). Kürzlich ist das bei Pausanias (2,24,3) erwähnte sonderbare "dreiaugige" Xoanon des Zeus *herkeíos* in Argos in Verbindung gesetzt worden mit den spätmykenischen Idolfunden der Akropolis von Mykene.²¹⁵ Hingegen besagt wenig, daß die *herkeíos*-Epiklese in den Linear B-Texten fehlt, weil hier ja Zeus-Epiklesen überhaupt noch gänzlich fehlen und wir nicht wissen, in welcher Helferrolle Zeus nach Linear B vorzustellen ist.²¹⁶

Insofern bleibt erwägenswert, ob nicht Zeus *auch* als *herkeios* — zusammen mit zweifelsfreien indoeuropäischen Ursprungsmerkmalen wie *patér*, *mégas*, Himmels-, Wettergott u.a.²¹⁷ — bereits “mitwandernder” Begleitgott der griechischen Stämme um 2000 v. Chr. war,²¹⁸ freilich zunächst noch mit bildlosem Kult.²¹⁹

Als Summe ergibt sich jedenfalls für den griechischen Hauskult allein durch die *herkeios*-Nachweise: a) frühestmöglicher Entstehungshorizont laut Literaturbelegen (A V), b) möglicherweise “Mitwanderung”, c) in der Art der Hauskultgottheit nicht nur ein *theòs patrôos* (A II), sondern — weil Zeus — der *theòs mégistos*, d) zumindest in Attika Zutreffen des Aspekts IV (vgl. § 4), e) in der Herdverbindung der Aspekt IX (vgl. § 9), damit auch Aspekt VIII (vgl. § 8).

§ 11 Ganz ähnlich, ja mit auffälligen Parallelen stellen sich die Verhältnisse von a) zeitlichem Entstehungshorizont (A V) und b) Art der Bedeutung (A IV) für die römische *religio domestica*:

Es sind die *di penates*, die römischen Hausgottheiten *kat'exochen*,²²⁰ die Aineias als einzige (!) *sacra Troiana* von Troja nach Lavinium in Italien überführt — also das Motiv der “Mitwanderung” von Hausgottheiten bei Völkerwanderungen. Damit verknüpft der (ins 6. Jahrhundert v. Chr. datierbare) Aineias-Mythos gerade die Hauskultgottheiten mit den Anfängen römischer Geschichte überhaupt.

Historisch verifizierbar ist daran, daß Lavinium, Mutterstadt Roms und latinisches Bundesheiligtum, Kultheimat der Penaten war: *ibi di Penates nostri*, heißt es bei Varro in *De lingua Latina* (5,144) von Lavinium.

Weitere Indizien sind: wie der Zeus Herkeios-Kult, so war der Penatenkult zunächst anikonisch, bildlos, wie ferner für den griechischen *herkeios* das *theòs patrôos*-Merkmal gilt, so für die Penaten das *di patrii*-Merkmal (A II), schließlich sind auch die Penaten mit dem Herd verbunden (A IX): *focus ara est deorum penatium*, heißt es wiederholt,²²¹ d.h. “der Herd ist der Altar der Penatengötter”. Entsprechend ist es seit längerem *communis opinio* der Forschung, daß die Penaten zusammen mit Vesta “zur ältesten Schicht latini-scher Gottheiten gehören”.²²²

Das leitet zum Abschluß zu Vesta über: auch Vesta, die urrömi-sche Göttin des Herdes und des Herdfeuers, ist so früh wie möglich

(A V), ist *antiquissima dea* (Serv.*Aen.* 9,257). Der Kult der *Vesta publica* wird fast allgemein vom altrömischen königlichen Herd- und Hauskult abgeleitet. Sie war, schon in Lavinium (!), eng mit den Penaten verbunden. Im kultbildlosen (!) und in der Rundform (!) singulären Vesta-Tempel auf dem Forum, dem vermutlich ältesten Tempel Roms — Müller-Karpe hat ihn ins 10. Jahrhundert v. Chr. datiert,²²³ — waren im sog. *Penus Vestae*, dem durch Matten verhängten und nur von den Vestalinnen und dem Pontifex Maximus betretbaren Tempelinnersten, die trojanischen *sacra* der Penaten deponiert. Sie galten als *pignora salutis atque imperii*, d.h. als “Unterpfänder römischen Heils und Herrschaft”.²²⁴

Mit Vesta- und Penaten-Kult aber befindet man sich im Zentrum der römischen Religion: “die beiden metaphysischen Pfeiler des römischen Staates” hat Carl Koch Kapitol und Vesta-Feuer genannt,²²⁵ und Franz Bömer sprach im Zusammenhang mit dem *Penus Vestae* zu Recht vom: “innersten Herzen des römischen Glaubens”.²²⁶

§ 12 In Zusammenfassung: Nach einer Einführung in die Problemstellung (§ 1) wurden neun Aspekte des in der Forschung bisher zu wenig berücksichtigten antiken mediterranen Hauskults behandelt (A I — A IX). Entgegen weitverbreiteter Ansicht war zunächst anhand der historischen römischen Verhältnisse nachweisbar (§§ 2-3), daß das antike private Haus im sakralrechtlichen Sinne kein *locus sacer*, *religiosus* oder *sanctus* (“heilig” oder “Heiligtum”), sondern vielmehr trotz seiner kultisch-sakralen Institutionen *libera religione* und ein *locus profanus* war (A I). Merkmal des antiken Hauskults (*religio domestica*), der als kultisch autonome “Zelle” begriffen wurde (§ 4), die zur Staatsreligion im ambivalenten Verhältnis des Parallelismus (A II) und des Antagonismus (A III) stand (§ 4), war demnach eine eigentümliche religiöse Zwitter- und Mittelposition: wiewohl eine auf “profanem” Gelände und durch eine “unqualifizierte” Kultgemeinschaft ausgeübte *religio*, war dennoch gerade der Hauskult — handgreiflichstes Beispiel war die (mit dem japanischen Hauskult vergleichbare) römische *religio domestica* und Pompeji (§§ 4-5) — die tatsächlich im Alltag praktizierte und daher *gelebte* antike Religion (A IV). Hierfür wurden die Ursachen z.T. im nachweisbar extrem hohen Alter des Hauskults gesucht (A V), wofür in den §§ 6-9 als historische Exempla die neolithisch-

bronzezeitlich-vorgeschichtlichen Hauskulte in Palästina (§ 6), im anatolischen Çatal Hüyük (§ 7), auf Kreta (§ 8) und im mykenischen Griechenland (§ 9) vorgeführt wurden, doch war bereits in § 1 auf wahrscheinliche paläolithische Kultvorläufer hingewiesen worden (Anm. 4). Eigenart dieses vorgeschichtlich-ursprünglichen Hauskults, dessen Herkunft nur zu einem Teil im Ahnenkult (A VI), vielmehr von Anfang an "komplex" ist (A VII), ist eine distanzlose "Lebensgemeinschaft" von Mensch und Numina im schützenden Umfeld des Hauses bei augenscheinlich diffusem Verhältnis von Sakralität und Profanität (A VIII), was als bisher verkannte oder jedenfalls doch unterschätzte "Sonderform" möglicher Religiosität und als (in historischer Zeit) "Religion innerhalb der Religion" interpretiert wurde. Lehrreich schien hier der Vergleich zwischen der minoischen Natur- und hauskultlichen Religion, die in der umstrittenen Frage der "Heiligkeit" minoischer Paläste offenbar bedeutungslos war, das heißt: die Funktion des in Palästen und Privatvillen identischen Kultzimmersystems war nicht die der Sakrierung der Hauskomplexe (§ 8). Wie hinsichtlich der mediterranen hauskultlichen Architektur von Beginn an klar zu differenzieren ist zwischen: 1. der Separatkultzimmeranlage (*sacellum*-Typus), z.B. in Çatal Hüyük und auf Kreta (§§ 7-8), 2. dem mit der Herd- und Feuerstelle (A IX) oder kleinen Hauskapellen innerhalb von Wohn- oder Eßräumen verbundenen Hauskult (*sacrarium*-Typus), z.B. in der mykenischen (§ 9), dann in der griechischen und römischen Religion, so vermutbar in den Ursprüngen, weshalb der mykenische Hauskult nur in der Übernahme bestimmter *di domestici* minoisch, in der Herdzentrierung sonst aber "im Prinzip mykenisch" ist (§ 9). In den Abschlußparagraphen 10-11 wurde auch für den griechischen (§ 10) und römischen (§ 11) Hauskult anhand der Beispiele von Zeus als *herkeios* und der *di penates* und Vesta ein außerordentlich frühes Kultstratum erkannt. Vorgeschichtliche "Mitwanderung" der *di domestici*, die *theoi patrôoi* und *di patrii* waren, damit zur hohen Klasse der "von den Vätern ererbten" genuinen und heimatlichen Gottheiten gehörten, reflektiert der Aineias-Mythos und erscheint im Fall des Zeus Herkeios als durchaus möglich.

* Beim vorliegenden Aufsatz handelt es sich um den textlich um die §§ 9 und 12 erweiterten und nachträglich mit Anmerkungen versehenen Vortrag, der am 29.6.1977 im Rahmen des Habilitationsverfahrens vor dem Fachbereich 14 (Altertumswissenschaften) der Freien Universität Berlin gehalten wurde.

¹ Bedauerlicherweise blieb die amerikanische Diss. von Matthew I. Wiencke, *Greek Household Religion*, Diss. John Hopkins Univ. 1947, ungedruckt (Auswertung der hauskultlichen Olynthos- und Thera-Fundbelege), doch befindet sich seit 1977 eine Xerokopie im Deutschen Archäologischen Institut Berlin.

² Ähnliche Klage jetzt auch im jüngsten Themenbeitrag zum römischen Hauskult, der vom archäologischen Befund in Pompeji, Herculaneum, Ostia, Campanien ausgeht: D. G. Orr, *Roman Domestic Religion. The Evidence of the Household Shrines*, in: *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* (Abk. im flg.: ANRW) II 16,2, 1978, 1559 Anm. 1.

³ So z.B. selbst in der (jetzt 1978 abgeschlossenen) RE, im Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie, auch in *Der Kleine Pauly* usw.

⁴ Die erst neolithische Datierung "*religiöser Wertungen des Raumes*, d.h. in erster Linie der Wohnstätte und des Dorfes", wie sie jetzt M. Eliade (*Geschichte der religiösen Ideen* 1, 1978, 50) vorschlägt, scheint zu spät. Bereits paläolithisch, zumindest jungpaläolithisch ist die räumliche Differenzierung (und damit ja doch unmißverständliche *religiöse* "Raumwertung"!): in: a) Sakralhöhlen oder sonstige außerhalb der Rast- und Wohnplätze gelegenen "heiligen Bezirke" und Opferstellen (grundlegend hierzu: A. Rust, *Urreligiöses Verhalten und Opferbrauchtum des eiszeitlichen Homo sapiens*, 1974, 100ff.; J. Maringer, *Die Opfer der paläolithischen Menschen*, in: *Antropica. Gedenkschrift P. W. Schmidt*, 1968, 249ff.), b) Wohnplätze mit z.T. religiösen *in situ*-Befunden, die sich kaum anders denn als hauskultliche Vorläufer klassifizieren lassen und entsprechend, wenn auch mit gebotener Vorsicht, so gedeutet wurden, z.B. die Venusstatuetten in Herdnähe oder in Wandnischen unter dem Aspekt der "Schutzgöttin der Wohnung" (Narr, *Handbuch der Urgeschichte*, 1, 1966, 319), die rituelle Siedlungsbestattung von Frauen als möglicher Hinweis auf die Rolle der Frauen als "Feuerhüterinnen", denen in der Hütte die "Pflege geheimer Gegenstände zufiel" und die "Hauszauber" besaßen (B. Klima, *Dolni Vestonice*, 1963, 273), die noch in der bandkeramischen Religion üblichen Opfergruben als "Bauopfer" (O. Höckmann, *Alba Regia* 12, 1972, 199) usw., wobei freilich hierfür ebenso selbstverständliche Voraussetzung der *länger* belegte Lagerplatz war, also Basis- oder Winterlager (vgl. G. Bosinski, *Der Magdalénien-Fundplatz Gönnersdorf* 1, 1974, 119), wie dann für die spätere Hauskultentwicklung das über Generationen hinweg bewohnte *feste* Haus. Knappe Überblicke: H. Müller-Karpe, *Geschichte der Steinzeit*, 1974, 94.97f. 244ff. 270f.

⁵ L. Schmidt, *Brauch ohne Glaube*, in: *Volks Glaube und Volksbrauch*, 1966, 289ff.

⁶ Wertvolle Überlegungen zum Themenkomplex: K.-S. Kramer, *Das Haus als geistiges Kraftfeld im Gefüge der alten Volkskultur*, *Rheinisch-Westfäl. Ztschr. f. Volkskunde* 11, 1964, 30ff.; ders. *Kieler Blätter f. Volkskunde* 2, 1970, 53ff.

⁷ Guter Überblick: L. Weiser, *HdA* 3, 1558ff.

⁸ M. Gschwend, *Köpfe und Fratzen an schweizerischen Bauernhäusern*, in: *Festschrift A. Bühler*, 1965, 135ff.; A. Hergouth - K. Vollath, *Giebelzeichen, Schutz für Haus und Familie*, 1963.

⁹ L. Hansmann-L. Kriss-Rettenbeck, *Amulett und Talisman*, 1966, 168ff.

¹⁰ E. Großmann, *Haus - und Stallsegn*, *Schweizer Volkskunde* 49, 1959, 17ff.

¹¹ L. Schmidt, Häuser auf heiligem Grundriß (s. ob. Anm. 5) 74ff.; zum antiken Hintergrund: W. Miller, Die heilige Stadt, 1961.

¹² L. Weiser, Das Bauernhaus im Volksglauben, Mit. Anthropol. Ges. Wien 56, 1926, 1ff.; M. Andree-Eysn, Volkskundliches, 1910, 78ff. 99ff.

¹³ L. Kriss-Rettenbeck, Bilder und Zeichen religiösen Volksglaubens, 1963, 15 (mit Lit.: 129 Anm. 17).

¹⁴ R. Weiss, Häuser und Landschaften der Schweiz, 1959, 150ff. m. Abb. 53ff.

¹⁵ G. Ränk, Die heilige Hinterecke im Hauskult der Völker Nordosteuropas und Nordasiens, FF Comm. 57 Nr. 137, 1949, 10ff.; in den Hütten der sibirischen Jugrer ist der Wohnplatz des "Hausgeistes" die Rückwand, in Blockhütten die "rechte Hinterecke": K. F. Karjalainen, Die Religion der Jugra-Völker, FF Comm. 11 Nr. 44, 1922, 16f.

¹⁶ F. Haase, Volksglaube und Volksbrauch der Ostslaven, Wort u. Brauchtum 26, 1939, 124ff.

¹⁷ H. Befu, Japan. An Anthropological Introduction, 1971, 116; J. F. Embree, *SUYE MURA*, a Japanese Village, 1969⁸, 237ff.; H. Naoe, A Study of *Yashikigami*, the Deity of House and Grounds, in: R. Dorson, Studies in Japanese Folklore, 1963, 198ff.; J. Kreiner, Die Kultorganisation des japanischen Dorfes, 1969, 52ff. m. T. 13; für Literaturhinweise zum japan. Hauskult, dessen auffällige Parallelen zum römischen Hauskult auch seitens der Japanologen notiert wurden, bin ich J. Kreiner, Köln, zu Dank verpflichtet.

¹⁸ H. Befu (s. ob. Anm. 17) 116; K. Florenz, in: Bertholet-Lehmann, Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte 1⁴, 1925, 295f.

¹⁹ In: Deutsche Philologie im Aufriß (hrsg. v. W. Stammer) 3, 1962², 2781-2884, einer der gelungensten Versuche eines Gesamtverständnisses des Hauses als — wie es Dünninger formuliert — "Lebensganzes", auch in den religiösen Belangen.

²⁰ Zum Zwecke der schärferen Begriffshervorhebung wurde hier und in den folgenden Zitaten der Kursivdruck gewählt.

²¹ Vgl. zuletzt die Vortragssammlung "Wohnungsbau im Altertum", Diskussionen zur Archäol. Bauforschung 3, 1979.

²² H. J. Nissen (s. ob. Anm. 21) 21.

²³ A. Beck, Zur Frage der religiösen Bestimmtheit des röm. Rechts, in: Festschr. Koschaker 1, 1939, 8.

²⁴ Grundlegend zuletzt zum *templum*, bei dem begriffliche Konfusionen häufig sind: P. Catalano, Aspetti spaziali del sistema giuridico-religioso romano, in: ANRW II 16,1, 1978, 467ff.

²⁵ Serv. Aen. 1,446.3,463; Cic. leg. 2,8,21 u.ö.; auch die Stadt war kein *templum*, daher auch nicht *urbs Roma*, auch nicht die *coloniae*: Catalano (s. ob. Anm. 24) 475; zur Frage möglicher *loca inaugurata*: P. Catalano, Contributi allo studio del diritto augurale I, 1960, 252ff.

²⁶ Da durch den *consecratio*-Akt "die rechtsgültige und dauernde Überweisung einer Sache oder Person aus dem Rechtsbereich des *ius humanum* in das des *ius divinum*" erfolgte (Wissowa, RE 4,1,896), wurde bei privaten Konsekrationen die Sache nicht zur *res sacra*: M. Kaser, Das röm. Privatrecht, 1971², 378; grundlegend: G. von Hertling, Konsekration und *res sacrae* im röm. Sakralrecht, Diss. München 1911.

²⁷ Ausführliche Beschreibung solcher Tempel-*consecratio*: Tac. hist. 4,53; zum Ritus zuletzt: J. E. Stambaugh, The Functions of Roman Temples, in: ANRW II 16,1, 1978, 557ff.; A. J. Pfiffig, Religio Etrusca, 1975, 59ff.

²⁸ Vgl. Macrob. 3,3,2: *sacrum est, quod deorum habetur*; Gaius, Inst. 2,4: *sacrae sunt*,

quae diis superis consecratae sunt; Dig. 1,8,1: *quod autem divini iuris est, id nullius in bonis est*; vgl. R. Düll, Rechtsprobleme im Bereich des röm. Sakralrechts, in: ANRW I 2, 1972, 282f.; H. Fugier, Recherches sur l'expression du sacré dans la langue latine, 1963, 64f.; J. Grand'Maison, Die Welt und das Heilige, Kairos. Religionswissenschaftl. Stud. 2, 1970, 109.135.

²⁹ Ebenso z. B. Fest., p. 424, 20-24: *quod autem privati suae religionis causa aliquid earum rerum deo dedicent, id pontifices Romanos non existimare sacrum*.

³⁰ Vgl. L. Wenger, Zum Cippus Abellanus, SB München 1915 (Nr. 10) 46.

³¹ Dig. 48,13,11,1.

³² Cic. dom. 51,132; Suet. Claud. 12,1.

³³ Vgl. M. Gelzer, RE 7 A, 917.929ff.; grundlegend jetzt: R. J. Goar, Cicero and the State Religion, 1972, 45-72, ferner die Komm. zu *De domo sua* von R. G. Nisbet, 1939 (bes. Appendix V) und J. O. Lenaghan, A Commentary on Cicero's Oration *De haruspicum responso*, 1969, 18ff.96ff.

³⁴ Zum politischen Hintergrund: W. Allen, Cicero's House and *Libertas*, TA-PhA 75, 1944, 1ff.

³⁵ Zur Mai-Datierung: Goar (s. ob. Anm. 33) 69; Lenaghan (ebd.) 27; P. Wuilleumier, Cic. Discours 13,2,1969,9; E. Courtney, Philol. 107, 1963, 155f.

³⁶ Cic. Att. 4,2,3; vgl. Lenaghan (s. ob. Anm. 33) 96.

³⁷ Har. 11.12.13-14.16; vgl. Dig. 1,8,9,2; Fest., p. 296, 34 u.o.

³⁸ Paul. Fest., p. 353, 9: *resecreare, solvere religione*.

³⁹ Tromp (De Romanorum piaculis, Diss. Utrecht 1921,16) paraphrasierte mit *sanare*; zu frei und ungenau die jüngste Übersetzung von M. Fuhrmann (Cicero. Sämtl. Reden 5, 1978, 420): "Zunächst will ich dartun, daß mein Haus keine Kultstätte ist." Denn eine "Kultstätte" war das Haus doch in jedem Fall (!), auch fehlt gänzlich die *expiare*-Bedeutung.

⁴⁰ Zuletzt zum *religio*-Begriff: R. Muth, Vom Wesen römischer *religio*, in: ANRW II 16,1, 1978, 290ff.; A. Michels, The versality of *religio*, in: The Mediterranean World. Papers pres. in honour of G. Bagnani, 1976, 36ff.; wichtig ferner: R. Schilling, Rites, cultes, dieux de Rome, 1979, 39ff.; W. F. Otto, Aufsätze zur röm. Religionsgeschichte, 1975, 92ff.; G. Lieberg, RFIC 102, 1974, 34ff.; H. Wagenvoort, in: ANRW I 2, 1972, 350ff.; A. Wlosok, AuA 16, 1970, 39ff.; H. van den Brink, Ius Fasque, 1968, 188ff.; F. de Visscher, Le droit des tombeaux Romains, 1963, 44ff.

⁴¹ Gut hierzu: K.-H. Roloff, Glotta 32, 1953, 102ff.

⁴² Fest., p. 348, 33ff.; Dig. 1,8,6-9.11,7,2,4; Inst. 2,1,7-10; Gaius, Inst. 2,3ff.; vgl. Kübler, RE 13,1, 958; vorzügliche Interpretation der "kinds of *res*": A. Watson, The Law of Property in the Later Roman Republic, 1968, 1-15; zu möglichen historischen Ursprüngen: H. van den Brink, Ius Fasque (s. ob. Anm. 40) 230f.

⁴³ Maßgebliche Untersuchungen hierzu: B. Albanese, Jus 20, 1969, 205-249; P. Fabbrini, Bull. dell'Ist. di Diritto Romano 73, 1970, 226ff.

⁴⁴ Dig. 11,7,2,5: *non totus, qui sepulturae destinatus est, locus religiosus fit, sed quatenus corpus humatum est*; vgl. zuletzt: M. Kaser, Zum röm. Grabrecht, ZSavSt 95, 1978, 30ff.; grundlegend: F. de Visscher, Le droit des tombeaux Romains, 1963, 43ff.55ff. (bes. Kap. I, 3 §4 "Le tombeau comme *locus religiosus*").

⁴⁵ Dig. 1,8,6,4. 11,7,2,7 u.ö.

⁴⁶ Vgl. M. Kaser, Das röm. Privatrecht, 1971², 377.

⁴⁷ So richtig schon: M. Kobbert, RE 1 A 1,578f. (mit indessen kaum zureichender Argumentation; ausführlicher, in: De verborum "religio" atque "religiosus" usu apud Romanos, Diss. Königsberg 1910, 13ff.); B. Albanese (s. ob. Anm. 43), der insgesamt 15 verschiedene *loca religiosa* anführt, hat das Haus zu Recht auch nicht einmal bei den uneigentlichen *loca religiosa* genannt.

- ⁴⁸ Macrob. 1,24,23.
- ⁴⁹ *religione, id est cultu deorum*; vgl. ebd. 2,28,72 u.ö.; vgl. zuletzt zur "primären Bedeutung des Kultes für die römische *religio*": R. Muth (s. ob. Anm. 40) 342ff.
- ⁵⁰ Cicero, Discours 13, 1952, 149.
- ⁵¹ M. T. Cicero, Sämtl. Reden 5, 1978, 258.
- ⁵² E. Burck, Die altröm. Familie, in: Das Neue Bild der Antike 2, 1942, 15 (wertvoller Beitrag auch zum Hausthema).
- ⁵³ Gaius, Inst. 2,8: *sanctae quoque res, velut muri et portae, quodam modo divini iuris sunt*; Dig. 43,6,2: *in muris itemque portis et aliis sanctis locis*; zum Problem: W. Seston, Les murs, les portes et les tours des enceintes urbaines et le problème des *res sanctae* en droit romain, in: Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire off. à Piganiol 3, 1966, 1489ff.
- ⁵⁴ Serv. Aen. 2,469: *singula enim domus sacrata sunt diis: ut culina penetibus, maceries*.
- ⁵⁵ Vgl. Inst. 2,1,10: *sanctae quoque res, veluti muri et portae, quodammodo divini iuris sunt et ideo nullius in bonis sunt*.
- ⁵⁶ Ausführlichste Untersuchung zum *sanctum*-Begriff: Fugier (s. ob. Anm. 28) 249ff.
- ⁵⁷ Zum Asylrecht gilt (jedenfalls mit Evidenz für das römische Privathaus, wozu Testimonien gänzlich fehlen!) noch immer G. Wissowas Urteil, daß es "entschieden unrömisch" ist (Religion und Kultus der Römer², 374, Anm. 3); zum anders zu beurteilenden romulischen Asyl (Liv. 1,9; Plut. Rom. 9): Ogilvie, A Commentary in Livy, 1965, 62f.; C. Koch, Der röm. Juppiter, 1937, 83f.; F. Altheim, Röm. Religionsgeschichte 2, 1932, 44ff.
- ⁵⁸ Serv. Aen. 2,761.
- ⁵⁹ Geist des röm. Rechts 2⁴, 158f.; Ihering hat sogar als Kapiteluntertitel "Das Haus ein Asyl" gesetzt!
- ⁶⁰ Vgl. M. Kaser, Das röm. Privatrecht², 35.
- ⁶¹ Beispielsweise darf nach Dig. 2,4,18.21 niemand (wenn im Haus) *in ius vocari*.
- ⁶² Wichtig hierzu: E. Schlesinger, Die griechische Asylie, Diss. Gießen 1933, 59ff.; O. Henssler, Formen des Asylrechts und ihre Verbreitung bei den Germanen, 1954, 58ff.; auch für die (wenigen!) historischen römischen Heiligtumsasyle galt bekanntlich, daß das "Asyl abgesperrt" war (Koch, Der röm. Jupiter, 84).
- ⁶³ Janus ist = *Saturnia regna*, weil Janus nach dem Mythos Saturn in Italien aufnahm; vgl. B. Gatz, Weltalter, goldene Zeit und sinnverwandte Vorstellungen, Spudasmata 16, 1967, 125.
- ⁶⁴ Grundlegend: R. J. Goar, Cicero and the State Religion, 1972, 72ff. 108ff.
- ⁶⁵ Damit wird, wenn auch auf methodisch anderem Wege, die Definition M. Kasers bestätigt: "Zur Sicherung ihres Daseins vereinigt sich die Familie im Kult ihrer Hausgottheiten" (Das röm. Privatrecht², 51).
- ⁶⁶ Vgl. K.-H. Roloff, *Caerimoniae*, Glotta 32, 1953, 121: "Überall, wo Heiliges nicht als totes Objekt, sondern lebend und von Menschen gehandelt, erlebt oder am eigenen Dasein wesentlich gemacht wird, da sind *caerimoniae*."
- ⁶⁷ Vgl. P. Voci, Diritto sacro romano in età arcaica, Studia et Documenta Historiae et Iuris 19, 1953, 69.
- ⁶⁸ Voci (ebd.); sie tritt gleichfalls ja in der juristisch unklaren Mittelposition zwischen Profan- und Tempelgut in der Frage des strafrechtlichen Schutzes zu Tage; gut hierzu: L. Wenger (s. ob. Anm. 30) 48f.
- ⁶⁹ Vgl. Orr (s. unt. Anm. 100) 99.125; Corpus A Nr. 9; Boyce (s. unt. Anm. 99) Nr. 77.122.442.
- ⁷⁰ Fest. s.v. *publica sacra*, p. 284, 18-22; Paul. Fest., p. 285, 7f.; Fest., p. 298, 22-25.

⁷¹ Religion und Kultus der Römer², 381; ebenso z.B. jetzt H. Wagenvoort, Wesenszüge altröm. Religion, in: ANRW I 2, 1972, 351: "Die römische Religion... war in historischer Zeit Staatsreligion."

⁷² Geschichte der griech. Religion I², 713.

⁷³ G. Rohde, Die Kultsatzungen der röm. Pontifices, RVV 25, 1936, 85; M. Kaser, Das altröm. ius, 1949, 350; C. Koch, RE 8 A 2, 1958, 1763, 39f.: "Der Strukturparallelismus zwischen *res publica* und *res privata* in Rom ist eine Wirklichkeit."

⁷⁴ R. M. Ogilvie, The Romans and their Gods, 1969, 105.

⁷⁵ M. Kaser, Das röm. Privatrecht², 51.

⁷⁶ M. Kaser, Der Inhalt der *patria potestas*, ZSavSt 58, 1938, 62: "Diese Gewalt ist total... Sie umfaßt das Haus in allem, was dazu gehört"; vgl. G. Longo, Diritto romano, diritto di famiglia, 1953², 115ff.; P. de Francisci, Primordia civitatis, 1959, 140ff.

⁷⁷ A. Pernice, Zum röm. Sacralrechte II, SB Berlin 1186, 1169.

⁷⁸ L. Schumacher, ANRW II 16, 1, 1978, 659; G. J. Szemler, Religio, Priestershods und Magistracies in the Roman Republic, Numen 18, 1971, 103ff.

⁷⁹ Athen. 15, 659 d-f.

⁸⁰ Introduction to Early Roman Law 1, 1944, 57.

⁸¹ J. Th. Kakridis, Griechische Mahlzeits- und Gastlichkeitsbräuche, in: Dialogos. Für H. Patzer zum 65. Geburtstag, 1975, 13; reiches volkskundliches Material: W. Deonna-M. Renard, Croyances et superstitions de table dans la Rome antique, Coll. Lat. 46, 1961, 19ff. 41ff.

⁸² A. Burford, Craftsmen in Greek and Roman Society, 1972, 164ff.; J. Ziomecki, Les représentations d'artisans sur les vases attiques, 1975, 64 Abb. 64 (Erzgießerei), wozu Komm bei Furtwängler-Reichhold, GV 3, 85f. (anders: Greifenhagen, CVA Berlin, Antiquarium 2, 26); zu "gods and cults in a restaurant" in Pompeji: W. F. Jashenski, Archaeology 20, 1967, 37ff.

⁸³ z.B. Festtag der *sollemnitates togae purae* mit Anlegen der *toga virilis* am Liberalia-Fest am 17. März im Haus *ante deos* (Prop. 4, 1, 132); gleichzeitig wurde die *bullae*, d.h. die um den Hals hängende Amulettkapsel, den Laren geweiht (Pers. 5, 31) und im Haus geopfert (Tertullian. *idol.* 16); vgl. zuletzt: Harmon (s. unt. Anm. 84) 1597f.

⁸⁴ D. P. Harmon, The Family Festivals of Rome, in: ANRW II 16, 2, 1978, 1592ff.; wertvolle Übersicht bleibt: E. Samter, Familienfeste der Griechen und Römer, 1901.

⁸⁵ Belege: Th. Wächter, Reinheitsvorschriften im griechischen Kult, RVV 9, 1, 1910, 28. 46ff. 69.

⁸⁶ Schon homerisch: Od. 13, 39ff.; vgl. J. Elmiger, Begrüßung und Abschied bei Homer, Diss. Freiburg/Schweiz 1935, 72ff.; Plaut. *Mil.* 1339 (*saluto te, Lar familiaris, prius quam eo*), *Merc.* 834ff.; Ter. *Phorm.* 311f. (Heimkehr); Cato, *Agr.* 2; vgl. W. Wrede, Kriegers Ausfahrt in der archaisch-griech. Kunst, AM 41, 1916, 260ff.; zu Reiseomina: L. Casson, Reisen in der Alten Welt, 1976, 208.

⁸⁷ Vgl. M. P. Nilsson, Die Götter des Symposions, in: Op. sel. 1, 428ff.; Deonna-Renard (s. ob. Anm. 81) 63ff.; B. Fehr, Orientalische und griechische Gelage, 1971, 38f. 74. 95.

⁸⁸ Vgl. H. Bolkestein, Theophrastos' Charakter der Deisidaimonia, RVV 21, 1929, 44ff.; W. Schmidt, Geburtstag im Altertum, RVV 7, 1, 1908, 13ff.

⁸⁹ The Religion of a Greek Household, Euphrosyne 1, 1957, 97 (zusammen mit Nilssons Aufsatz (s. unt. Anm. 93) originellster Themenbeitrag).

⁹⁰ Vgl. G. Rohde (s. ob. Anm. 73) 52. 116.

- ⁹¹ J. D. Mikalson, Religion in the Attic Demes, *AJPh* 98, 1977, 435.
- ⁹² FGrH 115 F 344: genannt wird der Arkader Klearchos, wobei bei den Frömmigkeitsbeweisen der allmonatliche Hauskult voransteht; vorzüglich jetzt zur Bedeutung griechischer Volksreligion: E. R. Dodds, Die Religion des gewöhnlichen Menschen im klassischen Griechenland, in: *Der Fortschrittsgedanke in der Antike*, 1977, 168ff.
- ⁹³ Roman and Greek Domestic Cult, in: *Op.sel.* 3, 285.
- ⁹⁴ Religion und Kultus der Römer², 33f.
- ⁹⁵ Hieron. In Es. 16,7.8, Hier. op. I, 2 A, p. 646.
- ⁹⁶ Grundlegend noch: F. Bömer, Ahnenkult und Ahnenglaube im alten Rom, *AfR Beih.* 1, 1943; mit starken Übertreibungen: C. W. Westrup, Introduction to Early Roman Law 1, 1944, 45ff.; 3, 1939, 148ff.; vgl. zuletzt: M. Kaser, *ZSavSt* 95, 1978, 17ff.
- ⁹⁷ E. Rabel, *ZSavSt* 50, 1930, 323f.
- ⁹⁸ I. Paulson-Å. Hultkrantz, Die Religionen Nordeuropas und der amerikanischen Arktis, 1962, 100ff. 240ff.; Ränk (s. ob. Anm. 15) passim.
- ⁹⁹ MAAR 14, 1937; zur formalen Lararienunterteilung: Boyce, 10ff. und differenzierter jetzt D. G. Orr (s. unt. Anm. 100) 84ff.; Abb. der vier Lararientypen: Orr (s. ob. Anm. 2) T. I-II, Abb. 1-4.
- ¹⁰⁰ Roman Domestic Religion: A Study of the Roman Household Deities and their Shrines at Pompeii and Herculaneum, Diss. Univ. of Maryland 1972, 152-192 m. Abb. 1-72, 193-215 m. Abb. 1-47.
- ¹⁰¹ D. G. Orr (s. ob. Anm. 2) 1586ff.
- ¹⁰² Boyce, 18 (mit sechs Belegen); weitere jetzt bei Orr (s. ob. Anm. 100) 94; vgl. zuletzt: P. Zanker, *JdI* 94, 1979, 470ff.
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- ¹⁰⁶ Zanker (s. ob. Anm. 102) 486.
- ¹⁰⁷ B. Thomas, Römische Villen in Pannonien, 1964, 151.364f.
- ¹⁰⁸ Thomas, a.O. 286.
- ¹⁰⁹ Orr (s. ob. Anm. 2) 1583 Abb. 7.
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- ¹¹¹ R. Etienne, Pompeji, 1974, 255.
- ¹¹² Th. Krauss-L. von Matt, Lebendiges Pompeji, 1973, 154.
- ¹¹³ Krauss-von Matt, a.O. 65.
- ¹¹⁴ Etienne (s. ob. Anm. 111) 255; vorzügliche Übersicht zur pompejanischen *religio*: F. di Capua, *Sacrari Pompeiani*, in: *Pompeiana*, 1950, 60-85.
- ¹¹⁵ La religion domestique dans la colonie Italienne de Délos, 1926.
- ¹¹⁶ Hauskultliche Auswertung: Wiencke (s. ob. Anm. 1) 99ff. mit Altar-Katalog auf T.I.
- ¹¹⁷ Katalog bei Wiencke (s. ob. Anm. 1) T.II.
- ¹¹⁸ Griechische Hausaltäre, in: *Op.sel.* 3, 265ff.
- ¹¹⁹ Greek Altars, 1949, 175f.
- ¹²⁰ M. P. Nilsson, Greek Folk Religion, 1961, 82.
- ¹²¹ Umsichtig-kritische Belegpräsentation: J. Cauvin, Religions néolithiques de Syro-Palestine, 1972, 43ff.

¹²² Archäologie im Heiligen Land, 1967, 54; ebenso zuletzt: M. Eliade, Geschichte der religiösen Ideen 1, 1978, 52, obgleich jede Interpretation hier hypothetisch bleibt; zum ostmediterranen Schädelkult, der bis ins 8. Jt. v. Chr. zurückgeht (Vf., KIPauly 5, 1975, 894): Cauvin (s. ob. Anm. 121) 62ff.; W. Burkert, Homo necans, 1972, 63f.

¹²³ Cauvin (s. ob. Anm. 121) 63.

¹²⁴ F. Bömer (s. ob. Anm. 96) 23; die *di parentes* sind die "Gesamtheit der toten Ahnen des Geschlechts" (Bömer, a.O. 7), hingegen die *di patrii* die "Lokal- oder Heimatgottheiten" (Bömer, 24).

¹²⁵ W. Dupré, Religion in Primitive Cultures, 1975, 90.

¹²⁶ I. Paulson (s. ob. Anm. 98) 244.

¹²⁷ Neben dem Ahnenkult z.B. Steinpfeilerkult im Nischensakrarium (vgl. Cauvin, a.O. Abb. 10), von Kenyon als "Vorläufer der *mazzebôt* der kanaanäischen Religion "verstanden (a.O. 53), doch bleiben auch hier die Deutungen im einzelnen umstritten; zuletzt zum neolithischen Steinkult: Y. Vadé, Sur la maternité du chène et de pierre, RHR 191, 1977, 3ff.

¹²⁸ J. Mellaart, Çatal Hüyük, 1967, 95ff.; wichtig: E. Heinrich-U. Seidl, Zur Siedlungsform von Çatal Hüyük, AA 1969, 113ff.

¹²⁹ Ebenso: Müller-Karpe (s. ob. Anm. 4) 278.

¹³⁰ Besonders eindringlicher Verstehensversuch der Religion in Çatal Hüyük: C. Dietrich, The Origins of Greek Religion, 1974, 94ff.; zu Jenseitsvorstellungen vgl. auch Cauvin (s. ob. Anm. 121) 64 (zum Wandbild der akephalen Figuren und Geier): "scène mytique se rapportant probablement à l'outre-tombe"; ebd. zur Magna Mater: "Maîtresse de la mort et de l'au-delà".

¹³¹ So C. Dietrich, Historia 16, 1967, 388ff.; wiederholt in: The Origins of Greek Religion, 1974, 94ff.

¹³² C. Dietrich (s. ob. Anm. 130) 99.

¹³³ Nilsson, Op.sel. 3, 274.

¹³⁴ Vorzüglich hierzu: Kl. E. Müller, Grundzüge der agrarischen Lebens- und Weltanschauung, Paideuma 21/22, 1973/74, 54ff.

¹³⁵ Vgl. M. Eliade (s. ob. Anm. 122) 50.

¹³⁶ C. Hentze, Das Haus als Weltort der Seele, 1961 (hier bes. das Kapitel "Der Ahne unter seinem Dach, in seinem Haus": 23ff.); wichtig auch: R. A. Stein, Architecture et pensée religieuse en Extrême-Orient, Arts Asiatiques 4, 1957, 163ff.

¹³⁷ Vgl. W. Helck, Betrachtungen zur großen Göttin und den ihr verbundenen Gottheiten, 1971, 91.286; Cauvin (s. ob. Anm. 121) 96ff.

¹³⁸ Vgl. Cauvin (s. ob. Anm. 121) 63f.

¹³⁹ Müller (s. ob. Anm. 134) 97.

¹⁴⁰ P. M. Warren, Myrtos, 1972, 85ff.265ff.

¹⁴¹ Vgl. vor allem R. F. Willetts, The Civilization of Ancient Crete, 1977, 52f.: "These features are strongly reminiscent of the layout of Çatal Hüyük...certain common architectural and religious features of Çatal Hüyük and of Crete some thousands of years later add fascination to the current general problems of Aegean prehistory"; zuletzt zur Frage der anatolischen Einwanderung: L. Vagnetti-P. Belli, Characters and Problems of the Final Neolithic in Crete, SMEA 19, 1978, 162f.

¹⁴² So C. Dietrich (s. ob. Anm. 130) 107ff.

¹⁴³ Das zeigen die Myrtos-Funde jetzt doch ganz unmißverständlich: die in einem anthropomorphisierten Gefäß verkörperte Hausgöttin von Raum 92 (Warren, a.O. Abb. 91f.Tf.69f.) ist: 1. "protectress of the water supply" (Warren,

266), 2. "the patron of weavers and potters" (J. N. Coldstream, *Deities in Aegean Art before and after the Dark Age*, 1976, 3), demnach in Funktion einer regelrechten Siedlungstutel.

¹⁴⁴ The Archaeological Evidence for the Minoan House Cult and its Survival in Iron Age Crete, Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill 1972; leider ungedruckt, doch seit 1979 als Xerokopie im Buchhandel erhältlich; nützlich ist vor allem der umfangreiche Katalog mit 120 Belegen (211-279).

¹⁴⁵ Nilsson, *MMR*², 488ff.; ders., *Gesch.d.griech.Rel.* 1², 345ff.; vgl. jetzt Coldstream (s. ob. Anm. 143) 7f.

¹⁴⁶ So von Warren, Coldstream (s. ob. Anm. 143).

¹⁴⁷ Ebenso Nilsson, *Gesch.d.griech.Rel.* 1², 303: "Die am deutlichsten kenntlichen Kulte sind der Hauskult... und der Naturkult"; vgl. zuletzt zum minoischen Hauskult: W. Burkert, *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche*, 1977, 62-67; B. Rutkowski, *Arch. Analekta ex Athenon* 9, 1976, 233-235.

¹⁴⁸ Sp. Marinatos-M. Hirmer, *Kreta, Thera und das mykenische Hellas*, 1973², 25.

¹⁴⁹ Gesell (s. ob. Anm. 144) 204.

¹⁵⁰ Vgl. ob. Anm. 143.

¹⁵¹ Gesell. a.O. 204f.; K. Branigan, *SMEA* 8, 1969, 28ff.

¹⁵² Vgl. Willetts (s. ob. Anm. 141) 52; zum minoischen Bergkult: C. Dietrich (s. ob. Anm. 130) 290ff.; B. Rutkowski, *Cult Places in the Aegean World*, 1972, 152ff.; Burkert (s. ob. Anm. 147) 58ff.

¹⁵³ z.B. im Knossos-Palast (Gesell Nr. 32-35), doch ist fraglich, ob die Innenhöfe in größeren Privat- und Landhäusern für religiöse Zwecke gebraucht wurden; zur Diskussion: B. Rutkowski, *Cult Places in the Aegean World*, 253ff.

¹⁵⁴ Gesell, a.O. 8: "three basic types of sanctuary rooms".

¹⁵⁵ Die Terminologie nach A. Evans, *The Palace of Minos at Knossos* 1-4, 1921-1935, und Gesell.

¹⁵⁶ Gesell, a.O. 208.

¹⁵⁷ Von Gesell (a.O. 205) jetzt als "a cult room for a chthonic or earth quake deity" verstanden.

¹⁵⁸ F. Schachermeyr, *Die minoische Kultur des alten Kreta*, 1964, 162.

¹⁵⁹ P. Faure, *Kreta*, 1976, 222ff.

¹⁶⁰ St. Alexiou, *Minoische Kultur*, 1976, 94.

¹⁶¹ F. Matz, *Göttererscheinung und Kultbild im minoischen Kreta*, *AbhAWL Mainz* 1958, Nr. 7,423; vgl. zuletzt etwa Willetts (s. ob. Anm. 141) 109: "The palace was a sacred house".

¹⁶² Rutkowski (s. ob. Anm. 153) 243.

¹⁶³ Vgl. Gesell, a.O. 8; Rutkowski, a.O. 229f.253.

¹⁶⁴ *Gesch.d.griech.Rel.* 1², 346 (vgl. ebd. 73ff.)

¹⁶⁵ *Das Heilige und das Profane*, 1957, 13ff.

¹⁶⁶ Vgl. Matz (s. ob. Anm. 161) *passim*.

¹⁶⁷ Rutkowski (s. ob. Anm. 153) 189ff.; E. T. Vermeule, *Götterkult*, in: *Archaeol. Homérica III V*, 1974, 10ff.; Burkert (s. ob. Anm. 147) 143: "Die heilige Stätte muß unverwechselbar markiert sein."

¹⁶⁸ Vgl. zuletzt G. E. Mylonas in seiner für die mykenische Religion grundlegenden Untersuchung: *Mycenaean Religion. Temples, Altars and Temenea*, *Pragmat. Akad. Athenon* 39, 1977, 94.127.

¹⁶⁹ Das Megaron des Mykene-Palastes maß 12,96 mal 11,50 m; vgl. C. Hopkins, *The Megaron of the Mycenaean Palace*, *SMEA* 27, 1968, 45ff.; St. Sinos, *Die vorklassischen Hausformen in der Ägäis*, 1971, 97ff.

- ¹⁷⁰ E. T. Vermeule, Götterkult, in: *Archaeol. Hom.* III V, 1974, T.2; der Rundherd im Tiryns-Megaron hatte einen Durchmesser von über drei Metern!
- ¹⁷¹ Vermeule (s. ob. Anm. 170) 31.
- ¹⁷² U. Jantzen, Führer durch Tiryns, 1975, 31.
- ¹⁷³ Mylonas (s. ob. Anm. 168) 105f.
- ¹⁷⁴ H. Drerup, Griechische Baukunst in geometrischer Zeit, in: *Archaeol. Hom.* II O, 1969, 127.
- ¹⁷⁵ *Gesch.d.griech. Rel.* 1², 348.
- ¹⁷⁶ Mylonas (s. ob. Anm. 168) 124ff.; Burkert (s. ob. Anm. 147) 66f.; Vermeule (s. ob. Anm. 170) 32-34.
- ¹⁷⁷ Mylonas, a.O. 125 (mit der Lit.).
- ¹⁷⁸ O. Frödin-A. W. Persson, *Asine*, 1938, 298ff.
- ¹⁷⁹ A. Akerström, *AA* 1938, 552f.
- ¹⁸⁰ Mylonas, a.O. 127.
- ¹⁸¹ Wiencke (s. ob. Anm. 1) 199ff.; D. M. Robinson, *Excavations at Olynthus* 8, 1938, 323.
- ¹⁸² Der Kopf ist mit Sicherheit weiblich (nicht männlich): Vermeule, a.O. 57; vgl. J. C. van Leuven, *Mycenaen Goddess called Potnia*, *Kadmos* 18, 1979, 128: "The term 'Potnia' is Indo-European, but the deities to whom it was applied were not."
- ¹⁸³ Vgl. E. Brandt, *Gruß und Gebet*, 1965, 26: "So klein, daß sie unmöglich als Kultbilder gelten können"; als Götterstatuetten verstanden: R. V. Nicholls, *Greek Votive Statuettes and Religious Continuity ca. 1200-700 B.C.*, in: *Auckland Classical Essays pres. to E. M. Blaiklock*, 1970, 6ff.
- ¹⁸⁴ Nicholls, a.O.; V. R. d'A. Desborough, *The Last Mycenaenans and their Successors*, 1964, 83.
- ¹⁸⁵ Mylonas, a.O. 127.
- ¹⁸⁶ Wiencke (s. ob. Anm. 1) 188.
- ¹⁸⁷ Gute Notierung der Unterschiede und zu Recht gezogene Folgerung, daß daher jeweils *auch* der Kult in den festländischen Megara und auf Kreta von "anderer Art" "gewesen sein müsse: H. Reusch, in: *Minoica. Festschr. J. Sundwall*, 1958, 339f.
- ¹⁸⁸ Mylonas, a.O. 129.
- ¹⁸⁹ Zum Ausdruck: U. Bahadır Alkim, *Anatolien I*, 1968, 66; M. Eliade, *Gesch.d.rel.Ideen* 1,51.
- ¹⁹⁰ Vgl. E. Heinrich, *AA* 1971, 587f.601.
- ¹⁹¹ Zu den ägäischen Haustypen mit Megaron: Sinos (s. ob. Anm. 169) 19.22.28.31.
- ¹⁹² E. Archi, *Il culto del focolare presso gli Ittiti*, *SMEA* 16, 1975, 77ff.; wichtig in diesem Zusammenhang auch: das hethitische Bauopferritual mit Einbeziehung des Herdes (B. Schwartz, *Orientalia* 16, 1947, 23ff.) und das Hausreinigungsritual (H. Otten, *Ztschr. f. Assyriol.* 54, 1961, 114ff.)
- ¹⁹³ Vergleichen ließe sich etwa der griechische Kolonistenbrauch, vom Staatsherd Feuer in die neue Heimat mitzunehmen (Etym. M. 694,28), oder der spartanische Ritus, in Kriegszügen vom Herdfeuer mitzuführen (Xen.Lak.Pol. 13,2).
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- ¹⁹⁵ Vgl. D. E. Sopher, in: *Religionsgeographie*, 1975, 337; H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, 1923*, 338ff.
- ¹⁹⁶ G. Widengren, *Die Religionen Irans*, 1965, 31f.; Kl. Schippmann, *Die iranischen Feuerheiligtümer*, 1971.

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- ¹⁹⁸ M. Gimbutas, Proto-Indo-European Culture: The Kurgan Culture, in: Indo-European and Indo-Europeans, Papers pres. at the Third Indo-European Conference at the Univ. of Pennsylvania, 1970, 155-197.
- ¹⁹⁹ A. Alföldi, Die Struktur des voretruskischen Römerstaates, 1974, 50ff.
- ²⁰⁰ Vgl. zuletzt: H. Schwabl, *RE Suppl.* 15, 1978, 1049f.; grundlegend: H. Sjövall, Zeus im altgriechischen Hauskult, 1931.
- ²⁰¹ Vgl. M. Hatzopoulos, Le culte des Dioscures et la double royauté à Sparte, *AEHE* 79, 1971/1972, 475f.
- ²⁰² F. Chapouthier, Les Dioscures au service d'une déesse, 1935, 313ff.
- ²⁰³ N. Masquelier, Pénates et Dioscures, *Latomus* 25, 1966, 88ff.; Chr. Peyre, *MEFR* 74, 1962, 433ff.
- ²⁰⁴ H. Vetters, in: *Festschr. Fr. K. Dörner* 2, 1978, 977ff.
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- ²⁰⁶ z.B. in der hom. Schwurformel (*Od.* 19,303f.), in *Hom. h.* 24,4f.
- ²⁰⁷ Hes. s.v. *hestiāchos*.
- ²⁰⁸ Dittenberger, *Syll.*³ Nr.991.
- ²⁰⁹ Autokleides, *FGrH* 353 F 1; vgl. Nilsson, Schlangenstele des Zeus Ktesios, in: *Op.sel.* 1,25ff.; Sjövall (s. ob. Anm. 200) 53ff.
- ²¹⁰ Dittenberger, *Syll.*³ Nr.991.
- ²¹¹ Inschriftlich in Troja: J. C. Caskey, *AJA* 39, 1935, Nr. 4; andere Belege: H. von Geisa, *RE* 23,756f.
- ²¹² Vgl. I. Paulson (s. ob. Anm. 98) 102.105; Ränk (s. ob. Anm. 15) 181.
- ²¹³ Schwabl (s. ob. Anm. 200) 1049.
- ²¹⁴ Schwabl, a.O. 1050 (Hinweis auf Herodot 6,68 u.a.).
- ²¹⁵ E. Simon, *RE Suppl.* 15,1978,1419; zu den Idolen: Lord W. Taylour, in: *Acta of the 2. Internat. Colloquium on Aegean Prehistory*, 1972, 76ff.
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- ²²⁰ Vgl. zuletzt: D. G. Orr, in: *ANRW* II 16,2, 1978, 1562f.; D. P. Harmon, ebd. 1593ff.
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- ²²² A. Alföldi, Early Rome and the Latins, 1965, 264.
- ²²³ Vom Anfang Roms, 1959, 97.
- ²²⁴ *Cic. pro Scauro* 48; *Ov.fast.* 6,445; *Liv.* 26,27,14.
- ²²⁵ *RE* 8 A 2, 1958, 1765,65f.
- ²²⁶ Rom und Troia, 1951, 117.

A FEW REMARKS UPON THE RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE OF ANIMALS IN ANCIENT EGYPT*

H. TE VELDE

For a fair insight into religion and culture in ancient Egypt, the place these accorded to animals can hardly be overestimated. Generally speaking, the animal has a larger place in many a so-called primitive or archaic culture than in the modern western culture. Yet the large part of animals in the ancient Egyptian culture and religion is very striking, and is already evident, for instance, in the hieroglyphic script. No fewer than 176 of the 777 hieroglyphs in Gardiner's *Signlist* refer to the animal kingdom, mammals, parts of mammals, birds, parts of birds, amphibious animals, reptiles, fishes and parts of fishes, invertebrata and lesser animals, that is to say that 1 out of every 4 or 5 hieroglyphs has to do with animals. Nowhere in the world have animals been drawn, painted or otherwise represented so frequently and in such variety as in Egyptian art. After so many centuries, we are still often struck by Egyptian depictions of animals for Egyptian art, being expressive of Egyptian culture, was directed upon typical traits¹ and could acutely define an animals characteristics.

Yet non-Egyptians cannot always enter into the way the ancient Egyptians conceived of animals and appreciate their ability to express this view in the visual arts. That the Egyptians could represent their gods as humans with animal heads was already a matter of bewilderment and derision to the Greeks. The problem lies mainly in the religious significance attached to the animal world by the Egyptians.

Every culture has traits with an immediate appeal, but also elements that are less easily comprehended, and the latter will often prove to be the religious ones. He who takes the stand that religion is really nonsense in the modern world, will easily come to suppose that religion had little meaning in ancient Egypt. According to an oral tradition, this was once expressed by Erman at the end of a lec-

ture on Egyptian religion in the following words: "Aber Quatsch ist es doch, meine Herren!"

On the other hand, if one holds that religion in the modern world is something other than could originate in the heart of man, or however one wants to put it, then one can just as easily bear with it that religion in Egypt contains a good many paradoxes and nonsensicalities that an ordinary person cannot grasp and that the faith of the believers, to use a term of Kristensen, cannot be rationally explained but must be described with religious intuition, which means subjectively. It would seem best to regard Egyptian religion as a constituent part of Egyptian culture, that like other parts has a meaning and is explicable, even if we do not always succeed in giving tenable and satisfactory explanations. Human beings, the ancient Egyptians included, are not always so easy to enter into and to fathom.

In the Egyptian world view man did not occupy such a dominant position over against the animal world as we have adopted almost as a matter of course following from the Judaeo-Christian or humanistic tradition. Hornung² even pithily formulated that man was not accounted lord of the animals, but partner of the animals. Animals were seen as living beings, as were men and indeed gods also. In the *Shabaka text*³ we read that the creative forces of the heart and tongue of Ptah are active "in all gods, all people, all cattle, all crawling creatures, (in short) in all that lives".

Kees⁴ has written: "Nach ägyptischem Glauben sind Götter und Menschen wie die ganze belebte Natur aus derselben göttlichen Urkraft hervorgegangen". It has often been noted in handbooks on Egyptian religion, that in Egyptian myths of creation so little attention is given to the creation of mankind. One of the few data on man's creation is the so frequently reproduced depiction of the god Khnum forming man on his potter's wheel. It is less well known that the god Khnum was equally regarded as the creator of the animal world.⁵ Animals, like mankind, have their share in providential maintenance by the creator god, as appears from an Amon hymn:⁶

"Thou art the only one, the creator of all that is. From whose eye men came forth. From whose mouth the gods originated. Who creates the herbs which the cattle live on. And the corn for the

people. Who creates that which the fish in the river life on. And the birds in the air. Who gives breath to the chicken in the egg. Who maintains the young of the snake. Who creates the nourishment of the gnat. And also of the worms and the fleas. Who cares for the mice in their hole and keeps alive the insects in every tree."

Thus we can come to understand the phenomenon which at first may well seem rather strange to a westerner, that in Egyptian ethics giving food to the hungry and clothing to the naked can be mentioned in the same breath with the feeding of animals. In a text of the first millennium B.C., when the mummifying of animals was already much in vogue, one could read: "I have given bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothing to the naked. I have given food to the ibis, the falcon, the cat and the jackal".⁷ Also, though, in a tomb of the third millennium B.C. in *Deir el Gabrawi* we may read "I have given bread to the hungry in the nome of the Snake mountain. I have clothed who was naked there. I have made its banks full with cattle and its low-lying lands with sheep and goats. I have satiated the jackals of the mountain and the birds of prey of the heavens with the flesh of sheep and goats".⁸

The glory of the creator god must not only be proclaimed to men, but also to the animals: "Tell it to son and daughter, to great and small. Tell it from generation to generation not yet born. Tell it to the fish in the river and the birds in the sky".⁹ In various Egyptian hymns, and not only in the famous sun hymn of Akhenaten, we find that men and animals adore the creator god: Quadrapeds skip, birds worship with their wings, fishes leap in the river. All that breathes and lives praises the creator god.

Representatives of the animal world, such as ducks or cattle, may function beside people as accusers of a deceased pharaoh.¹⁰ At the judgement of the dead the deceased must avow not to have maltreated any cattle (= animals).¹¹ We leave aside the fact that, according to the authors of the Book of the Dead, humans did not disdain to appear in bird shape after their death, for going into this matter more deeply would lead us too far. In any case there is no idea of reincarnation here.

In modern times religion, when not a ground for ethical and political action, seems to be reduced to a personal relation between god and man. In Egypt religion was just as much a system for

explaining the world and a system of communication capable of extension to embrace everything existing and alive. This relation between man and the cosmos, which indeed is not only found in Egypt but in many non-modern religions,¹² can afford an explanation of the fact that the Egyptians depicted their gods not only in human form but also in animal form. This does not mean though that these gods in animal shape were merely animals. Just as the Egyptians did not mean to worship images or human beings in their religion, so also they did not mean to worship animals, but gods.

How specific animals came to be associated with specific gods can usually not be determined historically for lack of sufficient data. The opinion still so often ventilated that in predynastic Egypt animals or animal gods were worshipped and that at the beginning of historical times a so-called humanization of the powers took place, so that the worship of gods in animal form is to be regarded as a survival from prehistoric times is still an unproven hypothesis and likely to remain so. That the Egyptians represented their gods not only as an animal or a human being, but sometimes as a hybrid consisting of a human body with the head of an animal or a bird is far from being a humanization of powers that was arrested halfway. In prehistoric and predynastic Egypt both animals and human beings were depicted, but whether we have to do here with images of divinities is uncertain and even improbable. Not until the beginning of historical times can we be sure that certain animal figures, human figures or hybrids of the two represented gods. A historical development in the sense that divine images in animal form were older than images in hybrid or in human form cannot be demonstrated.¹³

Since in ancient Egypt there was not yet such an exclusive interest in the specifically human as we see in later forms of religion and world view, and because there the difference between man and animal was not so absolute but regarded as relative, since men and animals both together are living beings, gods could be represented as humans, as animals and in composite human-animal form. In this direction can one seek an explanation. Explaining is something else again than understanding or being sensible of the feeling expressed. Once one has explained how it comes about that people

worship gods in animal form, we can if we like try to apply the subjective technique of understanding, however great the danger that we will come up against humanistic resistances to connecting the divine with the animal. A well-known quotation from the *Paedagogus* of *Clemens Alexandrinus*¹⁴ makes this plainer than an abstract disquisition: "The temples sparkle with gold, silver and mat gold and flash with coloured stones from India and Ethiopia. The sanctuaries are overshadowed by cloths studded with gold. If, however, you enter the interior of the enclosure, hastening towards the sight of the almighty and look for the statue residing in the temple and if a *pastophoros* or another celebrant, after having solemnly looked round the sanctuary, singing a song in the language of the Egyptians draws back the curtain a little to show the god, he will make us laugh about the object of worship. For we shall not find the god for whom we have been looking inside, the god towards whom we have hastened, but a cat or a crocodile, or a native snake or a similar animal, which should not be in a temple, but in a cleft or a den or on a dung heap. The god of the Egyptians appears on a purple couch as a wallowing animal".

It follows from the above that Frankfort's¹⁵ well-known view that in Egypt animals in themselves had a religious significance because they are different from men goes too far, since precisely this "otherness" of animals was not regarded as so absolute. We must note here that this view is not so much based on Egyptian texts, but seems to be derived from the then prevailing religio-philosophical theory of Rudolf Otto, which we may by now call outdated, positing the religious or the numinous as the *ganz Andere*. That which remains valid for certain forms of Islam, Judaism and Christianity need not be applicable to all religions. Van Baaren has remarked: "Rudolf Otto, while theorizing about the Holy as the *ganz Andere* has made the rare exceptions the general norm and has thus greatly impeded our understanding of religion as it actually is".¹⁶

Because the Egyptians regarded animals as bearers of life they drew certain consequences. Not solely in the sense of what we usually mean by reverence for life.¹⁷ Under certain circumstances they seem deliberately to have let a living animal die, e.g. to have let a cat drown so that it could be mummified and become an Osiris

and thus an intermediary between men and gods, able to transmit prayers. This then is not killing life to destroy it, but to let it arise from death.¹⁸

Already in prehistoric times¹⁹ animals were sometimes ritually buried: predynastic graves have been found of gazelles that were wrapped in mats and provided with funerary gifts such as pots of food and drink, as if it concerned a life that must be preserved. Scattered data from the Old Kingdom to the New Kingdom show that by means of ceremonies and mummification it was attempted to preserve the life of animals that people had become especially attached to, such as a dog, a cat, a monkey, a gazelle, a horse. Horses wrapped in linen that were found near Deir el Bahari and elsewhere²⁰ deserve special mention, for the horse came into Egypt at too late a date for it to become the sacred animal of a god. This means that animals were not only mummified as epiphanies of a particular god, but because they are bearers of life as humans are.

Especially in the course of the last millennium B.C. the mummifying of animals, which had been more or less sporadic in earlier times, assumed enormous proportions. If mummification of animals aims at preserving life, then the fact that it was not considered sufficient to mummyify simply one of a particular kind as the sacred animal of a god, but that people went on to mummify a tremendous number of individuals of various kinds, need not necessarily be written down a paradoxical symptom of decay beyond our comprehension, as some have done. Naturally we must guard against interpreting this mummification of animals which ran into astronomical figures, purely as disinterested reverence for life. As remarked above,²¹ an animal mummy could be regarded as an Osiris. Like the many bronze statuettes of gods that are also from the Late Period, they could be deposited in the appropriate place as a votive offering and an intermediary by people occupied with their needs, desires and interests.

A great deal more could be said about the religious significance of animals in Egypt. Animals were also hunted, killed and sacrificed.²² Hunting and killing, like sacrifice, could also be a religious act in which the role of a force of chaos and an enemy was assigned to the animal, which must be hunted down and even destroyed that the world order may stand. But this negative role

was not only reserved for animals. Human beings, too, had to be destroyed if they proved to be enemies of the pharaoh.

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¹ Cf. A. de Buck, *Het typische en het individuele bij de Egyptenaren*, Leiden 1929.

² E. Hornung, Die Bedeutung des Tieres in alten Ägypten, *Studium Generale* 20 (1967), 69-84, esp. p. 72: "Herr" der Tiere kann nur ein Gott sein.

³ H. Junker, Die Götterlehre von Memphis, *Abh. preuss. Akad. d. W.*, Jhrg. 1939, Philos.-hist. kl. nr. 23, Berlin 1940, 48.

⁴ H. Kees, *Der Götterglaube im alten Ägypten*, Berlin 1956², 3f. See p. 4-82: "Tierkulte".

⁵ S. Sauneron, Khnoum de Chashotep, createur des animaux, *BIFAO* 62 (1964), 33-37.

⁶ Pap. Bulaq 17. Translation with reference to parallels: J. Assmann, *Ägyptische Hymnen und Gebete*, Zürich-München 1975, 203.

⁷ E. von Bergmann, *Hieroglyphische Inschriften*, Wien 1879, Pl. VI 9-10.

⁸ K. Sethe, *Urkunden des Alten Reiches*, Leipzig 1933, 77.

⁹ See H. Brunner, Verkündigung an Tiere. In: *Fragen an die Altägyptische Literatur*. Studien zum Gedenken an E. Otto, Wiesbaden 1977, 119-125.

¹⁰ K. Sethe, *Die Altägyptischen Pyramidentexte*, Leipzig 1908, 386b.

¹¹ Book of the Dead. Spell 125.

¹² Th. P. van Baaren, *Menschen wie Wir*. Religion und Kult der schriftlosen Völker, Gütersloh 1964, 82-103.

¹³ See now for this paragraph: R. Merz, *Die numinose Mischgestalt*, Methoden-kritische Untersuchungen zu tiermenschlichen Erscheinungen Altägyptens, der Eiszeit und der Aranda in Australien, Berlin-New York 1978.

¹⁴ Translation is from K. A. D. Smelik, The Cult of the Ibis in the Graeco-Roman Period. In: *Studies in Hellenistic Religions* (ed. M. J. Vermaseren), Leiden 1979, 225f.

¹⁵ H. Frankfort, *Ancient Egyptian Religion* 1948, Harper Paperback New York 1961, 8ff.

¹⁶ Th. P. van Baaren. In: *Religion, Culture and Methodology* (ed. Th. P. van Baaren and H. J. W. Drijvers), The Hague 1973, 40.

¹⁷ Cf. H. Brunner, Albert Schweitzers universelle Ethik und die älteste Hochkultur der Menschheit. In: *Albert Schweitzer. Sein Denken und sein Weg* (Hrsg. v. H. W. Bähr), Tübingen 1962, 58-65.

¹⁸ J. M. A. Janssen, Opmerkingen over de dierverering in het Oude Egypte, *Annalen van het Thijmgenootschap* 37 (1949), 275-297 esp. 295f. and J. Capart, Chats sacrés, *Chronique d'Égypte* 17 (1943), 35-37.

¹⁹ H. Behrens, Neolithisch-frühmetallzeitliche Tierskelettfunde aus dem Nilgebiet und ihre religionsgeschichtliche Deutung, *Zeitschr. Äg. Spr.* 88 (1963), 75-83.

²⁰ J. Boesneck, Ein altägyptisches Pferdeskelett, *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts in Kairo* 26 (1970), 43-47.

²¹ See note 18 and also Hornung, *o.c.* 72, and S. Morenz, Ein neues Dokument der Tierbestattung, *Zeitschr. Äg. Spr.* 88 (1962), 42-47.

²² Hornung, *o.c.* 79-82.

MYTHE, LANGUE ET EXPERIENCE RELIGIEUSE

J. RUDHARDT

Produits d'une activité humaine, les mythes sont soumis dans leur élaboration à la psychologie de l'intelligence et à celle de l'affectivité, aux lois qui s'imposent généralement à la pensée de l'homme et à ses conduites; énoncés dans une langue, ils sont assujettis aux règles qui conditionnent l'existence de toutes les langues; récits, ils se plient à des structures communes à tous les récits. Pour autant que nous parvenions à les dégager, la considération de telles lois, de telles règles, de telles structures, peut nous aider à préciser la façon dont les mythes se forment ou s'organisent et comment ils sont constitués. Mais les hommes ne sont point immatériels. Ils vivent en communautés situées dans l'espace et le temps, caractérisées par des conditions d'existence concrètes; quelque générales qu'en soient les principes ou les lois, leurs activités, leurs langages, leurs récits sont influencés par une situation historique; ils seront donc éclairés par la considération des circonstances économiques, sociales, politiques, qui la définissent. Il en résulte que nombreux types de démarches peuvent contribuer à l'étude des mythes et nous aider à les mieux connaître. Il s'agit cependant de déceler ce qui distingue les mythes parmi les différents produits de l'activité humaine, parmi les différents emplois de la langue, parmi les différents récits et, dans une société déterminée, parmi toutes ses institutions.

Sans méconnaître l'utilité des diverses démarches auxquelles j'ai fait allusion, je n'en parlerai plus. J'essayerai seulement de mettre en évidence ce qui me paraît faire la spécificité du mythe, dans la civilisation grecque — que j'étudie.

A cette fin, je traiterai d'abord du rapport qui unit le mythe à la langue; dans une partie plus développée, je dirai ensuite ce qui me semble distinguer les récits mythiques des autres sortes de récits; je tenterai enfin d'en cerner le sens. Trois brèves remarques me tiendront lieu de conclusion.

I.

Parmi les phénomènes sociaux, les mythes sont assurément l'un des plus proches de la langue. Pour analyser les mythes, il semble donc légitime d'utiliser des méthodes empruntées à la linguistique ou inspirées par elle, comme font aujourd'hui de nombreux savants. Dans quelle mesure et sous quelles conditions leurs démarches sont-elles pertinentes?

Cherchons en quoi le mythe peut être rapproché de la langue. Nous trouvons-nous en présence de deux phénomènes indépendants mais analogues que nous puissions étudier l'un et l'autre de semblables façons? En d'autres termes, pouvons-nous traiter le mythe comme une sorte de langue originale et tenter, à la manière du linguiste, de mettre en évidence le système ou les structures sous-jacentes qui en assurent le fonctionnement?

Je l'ai cru jadis. Comme d'innombrables textes anciens ont disparu, nous connaissons plusieurs mythes grecs par des monuments figurés seulement. L'existence de telles images, dépourvues de références textuelles à nos yeux, m'incitait à penser que le mythe, trouvant son expression aussi bien dans un langage iconographique que dans un langage parlé, constitue une réalité autonome, indépendante de l'un et de l'autre. C'était une illusion. Lorsque des textes subsistants racontent les mythes illustrés par des documents iconographiques, nous constatons en effet une chose importante. L'imagier utilise des conventions ou des motifs gestuels propres aux leçons de son atelier et il invente certains traits de mise en scène mais il le fait en se référant au récit connu, avec une précision telle que les Grecs devaient avoir ce récit présent à l'esprit pour comprendre son œuvre exactement. Il n'y a pas lieu de supposer que les choses aient été différentes, dans les cas où le hasard nous a fait perdre le souvenir des mythes illustrés par certains documents archéologiques. Extrêmement précieux pour nous parce qu'ils attestent des traditions que nous ignorerions sans eux, ces documents se réfèrent pourtant de pareille façon à des récits, écrits ou oraux, qui leur préexistent et dont ils dépendent. L'impossibilité où nous sommes souvent de les interpréter d'une manière assurée, parce que ces récits ne se trouvent plus à notre disposition, suffit à le montrer. Ainsi l'image ne procède pas de je ne sais quel mythe abstrait et pur mais d'un mythe raconté, solidaire de la langue où il s'énonce.

Cette observation banale me conduit à répéter un truisme: les mythes sont des récits; or il en résulte des conséquences qu'il me semble qu'on a souvent méconnues. Si les mythes sont des récits énoncés dans une langue, le mythe ne constitue pas en lui-même une langue originale; il est un emploi de la langue commune. L'étude du mythe n'appartient donc pas à l'étude de la langue et de ses structures fondamentales; elle ne peut pas non plus constituer une science autonome, comparable à la linguistique; elle appartient à l'étude de la parole. En d'autres termes, il est faux de traiter le mythe comme un code: c'est un message.¹

Tout récit mythique présuppose évidemment un code; c'est celui de la langue où il est énoncé; il doit son intelligibilité à l'ensemble des conventions qui la définissent. Il faut connaître cette langue, maîtriser ce code pour comprendre une mythologie. Il peut être instructif d'en dégager les règles et les principes; toutefois, même si l'on parvient à les énoncer abstraitement, une langue réelle n'est pas abstraite; elle est solidaire d'une expérience culturelle. Un code linguistique se déploie dans la totalité du champ couvert par l'expérience culturelle qui s'exprime dans la langue considérée et doit sa capacité même de signifier à un tel déploiement. L'étude de la langue du récit, celle de la culture et du vécu dont elle est solidaire sont un préalable nécessaire au déchiffrement d'un mythe.

Indispensable, une telle étude n'est cependant pas suffisante. Il faut certes suivre les associations qui se développent autour d'un terme dans une culture définie, reconnaître le système des oppositions qui peuvent le définir, en le situant dans plusieurs séries d'autres termes, voisins ou antagonistes. Cette enquête nous apprend les significations que le terme envisagé est capable de revêtir mais elle ne fait point découvrir la signification et la valeur précises dont il est chargé dans un récit singulier. Il s'agit encore de considérer ce terme à l'intérieur du récit, la situation qu'il occupe, la fonction qu'il remplit dans le système limité composé par tous les termes employés dans ce récit, ainsi que dans les récits auxquels il se réfère, et qui constituent son contexte immédiat. Il n'est pas certain que les jeux d'associations ou d'oppositions que nous recensons dans le champ linguistique et culturel soient tous également pertinents à l'intérieur de ce contexte restreint.

Un exemple le montrera. L'union d'un fils avec sa mère s'inscrit

le plus souvent en Grèce dans une série d'actes tenus pour monstrueux, chargeant ceux qui les commettent d'une souillure terrifiante, et opposés aux conduites que le sagesse ou la piété recommandent. Il est pertinent d'attribuer à l'union d'Oedipe avec sa mère Jocaste le valeur qu'une étude générale du champ culturel hellénique nous fait ainsi découvrir. Nous constatons en effet que l'union d'Oedipe avec sa mère se situe, à l'intérieur de son contexte mythique immédiat, dans un système d'associations et d'oppositions parfaitement homologue à celui que je viens d'évoquer.² En revanche il serait faux d'interpréter de pareille façon les unions d'Ouranos et de Pontos avec la Terre Gaia dont ils sont issus. L'étude des récits qui racontent ces unions et, plus généralement, celle des mythes cosmogoniques grecs nous montrent qu'elles s'inscrivent dans un système différent où elles ne constituent ni une faute morale ni une impiété, où elles n'inspirent ni horreur ni réprobation, et qu'elles ne déclanchent aucune souillure.

C'est encore une observation banale dont il faut mesurer la portée. Le récit mythique doit son intelligibilité à celle de la langue dont il est solidaire; il en implique tout le système; mais le récit constitue lui-même un ensemble structuré à l'intérieur de quel chacun de ses termes reçoit pour signification précise l'une de celles seulement que l'étude de la langue et de la culture qui lui est liée nous apprend qu'il est généralement capable de revêtir.

II.

Le mythe, ai-je dit, est un usage, un emploi de la langue commune; il faut ajouter toutefois, que c'est un usage d'un type particulier.

Notons en premier lieu que les mythes sont des récits traditionnels. Certes, ils sont racontés par des individus; ceux-ci semblent même disposer en Grèce d'une marge appréciable de liberté dans l'évocation des personnages dont ils parlent et l'agencement des événements qu'ils rapportent; pourtant ces personnages et ces événements ne sont point issus de leur pure fantaisie; ils préexistent dans la mémoire collective.

Parmi les récits traditionnels, notons en second lieu que les mythes se distinguent par trois caractères principaux.

1. Voici le premier: pour le mettre en évidence, nous pouvons opposer les mythes aux contes. Contenant en eux-mêmes leurs prémisses et leurs conclusions, les contes sont indépendants les uns des autres; leurs personnages ont une identité mal définie, leurs actions commencent et s'achèvent dans un temps indéterminé. Ils peuvent débiter par la formule connue mais significative: "Il était une fois un roi et une reine...". Au contraire, les personnages du mythe ont des ancêtres et des descendants; ils prennent place dans une lignée. Davantage encore la plupart d'entre eux interviennent dans plusieurs récits différents, comme font aussi leurs partenaires, leurs adversaires et leurs parents qui se trouvent, eux-mêmes, mêlés de pareille façon à des événements divers, coordonnés entre eux ou successifs. Il en résulte que les personnages du mythe ont une identité précise, que leurs actions se situent dans un temps, lointain sans doute et distinct du temps de l'histoire mais se déroulant dans une durée structurée, où chaque événement mythique occupe un moment déterminé. Il en résulte aussi que les récits mythiques ne sont pas autonomes, que chacun d'eux en présuppose une pluralité d'autres, racontant ses antécédents ou ses conséquents. De proche en proche, tous les mythes tendent donc à s'enchaîner entre eux et à former un ensemble ordonné. A l'instar d'Hésiode, il arrive que les Grecs exposent un tel ensemble d'une manière systématique; quand ils ne le font pas mais racontent des événements mythiques limités, ils prennent pourtant soin de les situer sommairement en lui, par des indications généalogiques ou en rappelant celui des épisodes qui forment les grandes articulations de cet ensemble, auquel les événements concernés se relient immédiatement.

Certes la tendance que je viens d'évoquer ne se développe pas toujours d'égale façon et n'aboutit jamais à grouper la totalité des récits véhiculés par les diverses traditions dans un ensemble unique. La Grèce connaît en effet une multiplicité de mythes gentiles ou locaux; quelles qu'en soient les particularités, chaque tradition rattache pourtant ses récits à ceux qui évoquent les grandes figures et racontent les principaux événements du mythe hellénique. Mieux encore, elle les ordonne, serait-ce à sa façon, selon des schèmes qui s'imposent à tous les ensembles connus en Grèce et selon de pareilles articulations. Pour celui qui le raconte ou l'écoute, chaque récit mythique trouve donc sa place dans un système plus

vaste. Plus ou moins élaboré selon les groupes ou les individus, ce système reste ouvert, prêt à accueillir de nouveaux mythes,³ mais c'est en considération de lui, de la place qu'il y occupe, de la fonction qu'il y remplit, que chaque récit doit être interprété.

Soulignons une chose essentielle, à ce propos. Le système de la langue, tel qu'il est étudié par les linguistes, est ignoré des sujets parlants; de ce point de vue, il est inconscient. De pareille façon peuvent être inconscients, les mécanismes qui définissent le sens de chaque terme à l'intérieur d'un discours. Au contraire, le système mythique auquel chaque récit se rapporte et dans lequel il s'intègre est parfaitement connu du narrateur, comme il l'est aussi de ceux pour lesquels il s'exprime. Chaque auditeur, chaque lecteur d'un mythe connaît d'autres récits qui le complètent; présents dans sa mémoire, ils sont à sa disposition et lui servent à comprendre le mythe singulier. Même s'il n'est pas un érudit et n'a pas recensé toutes les traditions, l'Athénien qui entend par exemple raconter une aventure de Thésée sait la double filiation qui unit Thésée à Egée et à Poséidon, ne serait-ce que dans l'une des versions courantes; de pareille façon, il sait les mythes crétois, ceux d'Ariane et de Dionysos, avec lesquels les mythes de Thésée s'articulent; il situe le héros dans la série des rois d'Athènes et sait la fonction qu'il remplit dans le destin de la cité démocratique. Il sait enfin de quelle façon cette cité même se définit à l'égard des dieux, par l'ensemble de ses cultes et de ses fables. Chaque aventure de Thésée s'inscrit ainsi pour lui dans un vaste contexte, en considération duquel l'Athénien lui donne un sens. En bref, le système mythique où chaque récit trouve sa place, où les rôles de chaque personnage et de chaque événement se définissent est un système conscient même s'il n'est pas toujours intégralement explicité.⁴ En cela, il diffère des systèmes inconscients étudiés par les linguistes ou les structuralistes; il appartient tout entier à la parole; même s'il peut être inachevé, il constitue un message. C'est comme tel qu'il doit être compris; il serait encore faux de le traiter comme un code.

2. Pour reconnaître le deuxième des caractères distinguant les mythes des autres récits traditionnels, jetons un coup d'œil sur le contenu de ce message. Thésée est l'objet de plusieurs rites athéniens; de pareille façon, les héros de nombreux mythes reçoivent des offrandes ou des prières en différents lieux de la Grèce et

d'innombrables récits relatent les aventures de divinités honorées dans les sanctuaires helléniques. Il est vrai que tous les personnages du mythe ne sont pas de cette espèce; nous trouvons parmi eux des Centaures, des Sirènes et d'autres monstres que les pratiques de la religion semblent ignorer; nous y trouvons même des dieux auxquels ne s'adresse aucun sacrifice, tels Thaumas, Crios et plusieurs Titans. Toutefois les récits mythiques tissent des liens entre ces créatures et les personnages que j'ai mentionnés en premier lieu. Les héros se confrontent aux monstres; les dieux sans culte sont unis à tous les autres par des relations d'alliance ou de parenté et participent avec eux à de mêmes événements. Ainsi, dans le système formé par l'ensemble des récits, les figures apparemment dépourvues de réalité religieuse se définissent par la situation qu'elles occupent et le rôle qu'elles jouent à l'égard de celles que la religion vénère. Le mythe est religieux.⁵

3. Voici enfin le troisième trait spécifique du mythe. Si les mythes tendent à se grouper en un système, celui-ci n'est pas conceptuel et la cohérence n'en est point une cohérence logique.⁶ Il unit entre eux des récits et, bien que ceux-ci se rapportent à des réalités perçues par les Grecs dans des expériences concrètes — j'y reviendrai-, ils ont une façon particulière de signifier.

a) Dès la fin du VI^e siècle, dès le moment où les Grecs commencent à élaborer les premières sciences occidentales, plusieurs d'entre eux commentent les récits mythiques, les paraphrasent ou les traduisent dans un langage conceptuel. A l'époque où Aristote énonce les règles de la logique, Antisthène formule le principe de toutes leurs exégèses. Le récit mythique, dit-il, doit être compris à deux niveaux, selon l'apparence et selon la vérité: τὰ μὲν δόξη τὰ δὲ ἀληθεία. Ainsi, au cours du processus où les Grecs prenaient conscience de l'efficacité de la pensée conceptuelle et découvraient les lois de son exercice, ils reconnaissaient aussi la spécificité du mythe, récit dont la signification profonde est suggérée par l'ensemble des images qui en forment le contenu apparent. Le mythe est une parole qui fait un emploi systématique de la métaphore ou du symbole et qui s'oppose au discours conceptuel par ce trait essentiel.

Bien qu'il utilise l'image autrement que la parole courante, ainsi que je le montrerai, il est utile de considérer une des fonctions géné-

ralement remplies par cette figure de style pour mieux cerner celle du mythe. La parole imagée s'oppose au discours conceptuel, uni-voque parce que les concepts sont définissables. Or la définition présuppose une classification et toute classification requiert des conditions. Pour situer un objet dans une classe, je dois le séparer de ceux dont il est solidaire dans la perception que j'en ai; je dois négliger la plupart des qualités que cette perception lui découvre et qui en font la saveur ou la singularité, pour considérer seulement celles qui seront utiles à mon dessein; je dois donc décomposer ce que le vécu me livre dans une unité et en apauvrir le contenu. Certes, la pensée conceptuelle rétablit des liens entre les éléments qu'elle a dissociés et reconstruit quelque chose de cette unité première, en situant l'objet singulier à l'intersection de nombreuses classes; toutefois, partielles et successives, de telles reconstructions demeurent incomplètes; elles ne restituent ni la richesse du vécu ni son immédiate cohérence.

La parole imagée associe les mots contrairement aux règles des classifications conceptuelles en vertu desquelles ils dénotent avec précision; elle fait éclater ces classifications pour exprimer la richesse et l'unité d'un vécu que l'analyse conceptuelle désintègre. En faisant naître ou mourir le jour, la parole exprime une correspondance que l'homme a perçue d'une manière immédiate entre le phénomène météorologique et la vie, entre le monde physique et le monde intérieur: "Il pleure dans mon cœur, comme il pleut sur la ville". Victor Hugo évoque le ciel et la lune en demandant:

"Quel dieu, quel moissonneur de l'éternel été
avait en s'en allant négligemment jeté
cette faucille d'or dans le champ des étoiles".

Il unit le ciel, la lune et l'été à l'activité glorieuse des moissons mais il élargit cette activité humaine à la dimension du cosmos par une double interrogation: "quel dieu, quel moissonneur?" pour évoquer une émotion que Ruth a perçue globalement et qui la prépare au miracle dont elle sera bientôt l'objet.

Le mythe agit de pareille façon; il est un emploi systématique de l'image dans sa fonction désintégrant quant aux structures des classifications conceptuelles — que cependant il présuppose — mais unificatrice quant à la diversité de l'Erlebnis.

Entre la parole mythique et la parole poétique des modernes, il existe pourtant une différence capitale. Le mythe est un récit traditionnel; il doit à ce caractère social une vertu que les images populaires ou poétiques n'ont habituellement pas. Elles ne peuvent être développée trop longuement sans perdre leur intelligibilité, alors que les images mythiques, familières à tous les membres d'une communauté culturelle, leur sont identifiables dans n'importe quel contexte et peuvent s'enchaîner indéfiniment sans qu'ils cessent de les comprendre. Une pareille assimilation de l'image aux habitudes collectives lui fait généralement perdre son pouvoir désintégrant. Trop usuelles, des expressions telles que le lever ou le coucher du jour cessent d'être des figures de style efficaces et celles auxquelles j'ai fait allusion, la naissance ou la mort du jour, peuvent également se banaliser; dans cet emploi, on comprend alors les mots "lever" ou "naissance", "mort" ou "coucher" comme de simples synonymes des mots "début" et "fin". Une particularité du langage mythique, sur laquelle il convient que nous portions notre attention maintenant, évite de semblables conséquences pour les figures mythiques.

b) Je me suis référé à des philosophes et à des exégètes, par commodité; vous pourriez penser que leur jugement n'est point significatif car il s'écarte peut être de l'opinion commune. Plusieurs observations nous montreront que ce n'est pas le cas. Les récits mythiques se signalent à l'attention des Grecs, comme à la nôtre, par l'emploi de certains noms propres, désignant des entités ou des êtres différents de ceux que les perceptions sensorielles nous font immédiatement connaître. Or plusieurs de ces noms propres présentent un caractère remarquable. Considérons par exemple les noms Océanos et Ouranos. Ils constituent des signes, unissant d'une manière indissociable un signifiant et un signifié, comme tous les signes linguistiques.

Leurs signifiants sont respectivement les images acoustiques formées par la succession des syllabes Océ-a-nos et Ou-ra-nos, tandis que leurs signifiés sont les images mentales que les Grecs se font des dieux ainsi nommés. Or lorsque nous cherchons à saisir ces images, elles se dérobent à nous. L'image d'Océanos est celle d'un fleuve tourbillonnant dont les flots entourent le monde; c'est aussi celle d'un vieillard qui habite un palais lointain, auprès de son épouse

Téthys à laquelle il ne fait plus l'amour depuis longtemps; ce sont encore celle d'un principe indispensable à la vie et celle d'un agent de purification. Ouranos est le ciel étoilé qui s'étend au-dessus de nos têtes; c'est un être vivant, un générateur puissant, un mâle abusif, si clairement sexué que Cronos peut un jour le châtrer; c'est un détenteur de la souveraineté, obscurément lié à elle, même quand il est détrôné. Chacun des deux noms propres évoque ainsi une pluralité d'images hétérogènes et il ne le fait pas d'une manière sporadique, dans des contextes variables, d'une façon telle que nous puissions simplement lui reconnaître des significations différentes suivant les cas. Il le fait à l'intérieur de développements continus, souvent à l'intérieur d'une même phrase. Le même nom est donc solidairement uni à plusieurs images, toujours mobiles et alternantes, de telle sorte que la pensée, renvoyée de l'une à l'autre, ne peut s'arrêter à nulle d'entre elles. Qu'est-ce à dire, si ce n'est qu'aucune d'entre elles n'en constitue le signifié définitif? Signifiés provisoires, elles se constituent à leur tour en signifiants et servent à l'esprit pour se porter au-delà d'elles vers un signifié second, comme la faucille, dans le vers de Victor Hugo, l'oriente vers la lune. De ce point de vue, elles s'apparentent aux images des figures stylistiques dont nous avons parlé mais leur pluralité et leur alternance les en distinguent. Cette alternance et cette pluralité en accroissent le pouvoir désintégrant et leur permettent de conserver leur vertu, en dépit du fait que la tradition rend les images mythiques usuelles pour tous les membres d'une communauté.

Une telle observation n'est pas seulement valable pour quelques noms propres isolés; elle l'est aussi pour des propositions et des récits entiers. Lorsqu'Hésiode raconte l'union d'Ouranos et de Gaia, il évoque simultanément l'image d'un ciel solide, étoilé, qui se rapproche de la terre au point de ne laisser, entre leurs deux surfaces accolées, nul espace où la vie puisse se développer et celle d'un mâle qui s'accouple à une femelle, mu par un désir amoureux, mâle dont la volonté tyrannique interdit à sa partenaire de mettre au monde les enfants qu'elle conçoit de ses embrassements. Du même coup, il présente tout à la fois en Gaia la terre géographique, délimitée par les étendues du ciel et de la mer, et une femme enceinte, souffrant de ne pouvoir être délivrée lorsqu'elle atteint au terme de ses gravidités. D'une manière analogue, nous voyons

coexister, dans le même poème, deux types de propositions: “Styx est une des filles d’Océanos et de Téthys, la plus prestigieuse de leurs enfants” — “Styx est une dérivation du fleuve Océanos, entraînant sous la terre la dixième partie de ses eaux”. Par leur alternance et leur disparité, de telles propositions-dont aucune ne prédomine-servent ensemble à orienter l’esprit au-delà d’elles, dans la visée d’un sens qui n’est point formulable, si ce n’est par le jeu de pareilles images, indispensables à l’esprit mais toujours provisoires, et qui requièrent d’être dépassées.

c) Un fait nous montrera que les Grecs ont parfaitement reconnu cette fonction symbolique des énoncés mythiques. A la fin du VI^e siècle, la réforme de Clisthène a transformé la composition du corps civique athénien; elle l’a réparti en 10 tribus homologues, groupant dans chacune d’elles des communes urbaines, des communes rurales et des communes côtières. Or chacune de ces tribus fabriquées de toutes pièces, dans un dessein politique, a reçu un héros pour éponyme. Sachant l’époque récente de l’attribution d’un tel ancêtre à des populations hétérogènes dispersées dans trois régions de l’Attique, les Athéniens l’ont pourtant prise au sérieux; chaque tribu voue un culte à son héros et un orateur du IV^e siècle peut affirmer que l’exemple de l’éponyme définit les vertus, le style de vie qui convient à sa tribu. Ainsi, bien que les concitoyens de Thucydide n’aient pas cru à l’idée d’une filiation historique entre les héros et les membres du groupe politique auquel il donne son nom, l’image de cette filiation, validée par l’oracle delphique, n’en signifiait pas moins pour eux une vérité essentielle. En bref, dans un langage qui n’est sans doute pas celui de tous et même s’ils font parfois violence à la tradition pour assujettir les enseignements du mythe aux exigences de leur doctrine personnelle, exégètes et philosophes énoncent un fait dont les Grecs ont généralement conscience: l’image mythique signifie autre chose ou plus que ce qu’elle représente; le récit mythique, autre chose ou plus que ce qu’il raconte; le système formé par l’ensemble des récits est un message symbolique.

Prévenons un malentendu. Le mythe n’est point une allégorie, comme certaines des exégèses antiques pourraient nous le donner à penser, si nous les considérons isolément. Elles semblent enseigner que tel des personnages de la fable figure un élément physique ou

une qualité morale, par exemple, mais, si nous les examinons toutes, nous constatons que les choses sont plus complexes. Il arrive que le même auteur propose plusieurs interprétations d'un même personnage; des traductions d'un même mythe, formulées respectivement en termes de physique, de biologie, de psychologie ou de morale, coexistent parfois, sans que les Grecs les tiennent pour incompatibles. Chacune d'entre elles peut en effet éclairer la signification du mythe à leurs yeux mais aucune ne l'énonce parfaitement. La pluralité des traductions ressemble à celles des images formant le signifié apparent des noms mythiques, ainsi que nous l'avons vu: peut-être utiles, elles sont partielles et provisoires; le mythe nous oriente au-delà d'elles, chargé d'un sens que toutes les exégèses ensemble ne parviennent point à épuiser. Il ne peut être pleinement exprimé que par le mythe lui-même, qui l'énonce symboliquement.

III.

Il ne nous sera donc pas possible de définir un tel sens. J'essaierai pourtant de situer le lieu de sa pertinence et je tenterai de le suggérer. Dans la parole banale, nous avons observé que l'image exprime la richesse et l'unité d'un vécu que l'analyse conceptuelle désintègre ou apauvrit; ponctuelle et brève, elle évoque une expérience singulière. Traditionnel et développé dans de multiples épisodes, le mythe fait éclater les structures conceptuelles de pareille façon, pour exprimer un vécu collectif; il implique de nombreuses expériences, ressenties par les membres d'une communauté comme des expériences complémentaires et d'une pareille nature. Nous avons aussi constaté que les récits mythiques, directement ou non, se réfèrent à des personnages sacrés, honorés dans les cultes helléniques, et que leur contenu est religieux. L'expérience où le mythe grec trouve sa source et qu'il exprime est une expérience religieuse — qu'il contribue d'ailleurs à façonner; son sens est inintelligible si l'on ne se réfère point à elle.⁷

La religion grecque est extrêmement complexe; il faut des années d'étude et d'ascèse pour commencer à y pénétrer un peu. Au prix de simplifications outrageuses, j'en indiquerai brièvement quelques traits.

a) Pour la conscience grecque, l'existence du divin et son action dans le monde sont indubitables mais les hommes les perçoivent occasionnellement et d'une manière partielle. Ils ont en effet le sentiment de se trouver en présence du divin et d'en saisir une manifestation dans des paysages ou en des lieux, à des moments de l'année ou du jour, dans des conjonctures événementielles définies. De telles circonstances peuvent se répéter; la tradition les a recensées, reconnaissant des ressemblances entre les émotions religieuses qui les accompagnent ordinairement, et a nommé cela du divin qui paraît se manifester aux hommes à travers elles. La diversité des noms propres que les Grecs donnent à leurs dieux correspond à la diversité des types catalogués de conjonctures où ils font de telles expériences. En voici la confirmation: il arrive aux Grecs d'éprouver le sentiment d'une présence ou d'une action divine dans des circonstances que la tradition ne leur a pas appris à identifier assez clairement pour qu'ils puissent nommer un dieu précis. Ils expriment alors leur conviction d'avoir perçu cette intervention divine et en désignent l'agent par des tournures vagues, telles que "les dieux", "un des dieux", "un dieu", "le dieu", "la divinité", "le divin"; masculines ou neutres, plurielles ou singulières, ces tournures sont équivalentes à leurs yeux, car elles alternent et se substituent les unes aux autres, dans les mêmes développements ou les mêmes phrases. Ainsi les noms traditionnels des dieux désignent chacun le divin, tel qu'il se manifeste dans l'expérience hellénique lors de circonstances qui se répètent; chacune d'entre elles est concrète.

La tradition n'apprend pas seulement aux Grecs à identifier ces types de circonstances et à nommer le divin dont ils ressentent à travers elles l'influence ou la proximité; avec les noms appropriés, elle leur fournit aussi des images au moyen desquelles ils se donnent une conscience plus claire des expériences qu'ils ont faites. Elle emprunte la matière de ces images aux impressions sensibles usuelles, pourvoyant les dieux nommés de traits, de pensées, de sentiments semblables à ceux d'êtres familiers, hommes ou animaux, mais il ne faut pas se méprendre sur la valeur que les Grecs leur attribuent. Ils ne les prennent point pour des représentations adéquates de la divinité. Nulle forme sensible ne correspond pour eux à la réalité d'un dieu qui échappe à la vue, nulle forme circonscrite, à

celle d'une être qui agit simultanément en plusieurs lieux. Certaines aberrations des figures divines signalent la distance qui sépare ainsi le divin des images que l'homme s'en fait. Hybrides, elles unissent des éléments humains à des éléments animaux, dans des compositions dont l'expérience sensible ne donne aucun exemple. En outre ces images alternent. Jeune fille casquée, Athéna peut être symbolisée par le vol d'une chouette; Zeus qu'on s'imagine le plus souvent sous les traits d'un homme mûr, par le vol d'un aigle ou l'éclat de la foudre. Ainsi l'image d'un dieu ne prétend point en reproduire les traits. Comme le nom propre, elle est utile au culte, indispensable à la pensée pour appréhender le divin mais efficace, dans la mesure où cette pensée la dépasse pour se porter vers lui. Dans la conscience religieuse hellénique, la figure d'un dieu est d'emblée mythique et chacun de ses traits est perçu symboliquement.

b) Nous voyons donc les Grecs, extrêmement sensibles à la pluralité des manifestations du divin, distinguer et honorer de nombreux dieux; mais ils le sont aussi à sa cohérence. Entre les différents types de conjonctures où ils éprouvent l'impression de saisir une action divine et la nomment conformément aux leçons de la tradition, ils ressentent une subtile continuité. Ce sentiment trouve son expression dans les multiples relations que la mythologie tisse entre tous les dieux; elle exprime du même coup l'expérience globale qu'ils font de leur appartenance au monde.

Il faudrait étudier les systèmes mythiques grecs en détail, pour le bien montrer. Je n'en ai pas le temps. Ils racontent un processus de différenciations successives conduisant de l'unité confuse d'une substance primordiale, symbolisée par une ou quelques entités à la fois précosmiques et divines, à la multiplicité distincte où des entités mieux individualisées, les unes plus cosmiques bien qu'elles conservent une qualité divine immanente, les autres plus divines et transcendantes bien qu'elles conservent une activité cosmique, paraissent et se situent dans un espace et dans un temps qui reçoivent ainsi leur structure. Au cours de ce processus, les êtres sont de mieux en mieux définis et spécifiés, plus concrètement actifs et mieux identifiables. Or, si la spécification intensifie la présence, elle amenuise du même coup. Il vient un moment où les êtres sont si bien spécifiés que, limités dans l'espace et le temps, ils n'ont plus

qu'une existence de fait: ils sont mortels. La mortalité est donc un aboutissement de la spécification. Les mortels, les hommes, apparaissent ici et là dans le monde, issus en des lieux précis d'une terre qui fut une des entités premières mais dont les régions sont désormais différenciées, ou nés au terme de longues lignées de dieux, liés au primordial et au divin par cette origine, séparés de lui par leur facticité.

Mais les mythes grecs n'exposent pas seulement ce déploiement de la pluralité. Ils racontent aussi comment, après de nombreux conflits et de nombreuses crises, chacun des êtres multiples reçoit la place et la fonction qui conviennent à sa nature propre, telle qu'elle est alors bien déterminée, et comment Zeus, le dieu souverain, soumet l'univers à un ordre juste où l'un et le multiple tendent à se concilier. Les hommes se situent à l'intérieur de cet ordre. Plusieurs récits racontent les crises au terme desquels, éloignés des dieux, ils reçoivent les techniques, la civilisation qui leur permet de subsister dans cet éloignement, ainsi que les instruments rituels par lesquels ils communiquent avec les dieux, sans abolir entre eux la distance requise par l'ordre universel.⁸ Au sein de cet ordre, d'autres mythes éclairent enfin, la situation et la vocation particulières de chaque peuple, de chaque cité, de chaque famille, de chaque corporation, ou les conditions et limites de l'action individuelle. Ainsi, au-delà des contacts avec le divin que les Grecs ont le sentiment de percevoir dans une pluralité de circonstances singulières, le mythe exprime celui qu'ils éprouvent d'une cohérence, unissant entre elles de telles expériences. Il s'offre à leur pensée comme un instrument propre à les approfondir, à les coordonner pour éclairer les conditions de leur existence, dans un monde où des activités divines se déploient, dans un ordre universel où chacune de leurs conduites trouve sa norme et son sens.

c) J'ai d'abord évoqué les expériences singulières où les Grecs éprouvent le sentiment de percevoir une présence divine, parce que l'étude de ces expériences et celle des circonstances où elles ont lieu nous permet le mieux d'accéder à la réalité de ce qu'ils ont vécu, mais il est évident qu'elles sont elles mêmes partiellement conditionnées par la préexistence de nombreux mythes dans leur mémoire. Ces mythes influencent la façon dont ils les font et les comprennent, comme notre connaissance de la physique, même

approximative, influence celle dont nous percevons la foudre et le tonnerre.

Davantage encore, façonné par la tradition mythique, habitué à voir dans ses images les signes énigmatiques d'un sens qui est conjointement celui du monde et celui de l'existence humaine, l'esprit grec déchiffre des signes pareils dans la nature et dans l'histoire. Chaque fait, chaque événement peuvent se donner à lui tout à la fois comme des phénomènes justiciables d'une observation positive, d'une explication causale, d'une étude scientifique et comme les signes, difficiles à interpréter, où se manifeste l'ordonnance sacrée du cosmos et sur lesquels, par conséquent, il convient aux hommes de régler leurs conduites.

Terminons par trois observations.

1) J'ai insisté sur le fait que les récits mythiques et le système entier où ils s'ordonnent appartiennent à la parole et constituent un message. Or ils sont traditionnels et, nous venons de le constater, ils s'offrent aux individus comme un instrument de leur pensée; ceux-ci les répètent, en les choisissant parmi les traditions propres aux diverses communautés auxquels chacun d'eux appartient; ils peuvent les réélaborer, en modifier l'ordonnance, avec plus ou moins d'originalité, pour exprimer plus précisément leur expérience religieuse personnelle et l'approfondir. Cette fonction instrumentale du mythe n'en fait pas davantage un code que la philosophie de Kant, par exemple, ne devient un code pour celui qu'elle inspire et qui développe sa propre pensée sous cette inspiration. Certes l'œuvre de Kant a apporté des mots nouveaux ou des acceptions nouvelles de mots anciens; entrés dans la langue allemande, ils sont devenus les éléments d'un code, dans la mesure où ils ont ainsi modifié le code linguistique commun à certaines couches de la société allemande⁹. De pareille façon, les noms mythiques sont les éléments d'un code, dans la mesure où ils se trouvent intégrés dans le code linguistique commun des Grecs. Toute fois, de même que l'exposé d'une philosophie d'inspiration kantienne, avec ses références à Kant, reste un message, de même restent un message le récit mythique réélaboré et tous les récits traditionnels dans l'ensemble desquels ce remaniement l'insère.¹⁰

2) Pour comprendre une phrase quelconque, il ne suffit pas d'étudier le code linguistique dans lequel elle est énoncée; maîtrisant ce code, serait-ce sans être capable d'en formuler les lois, il faut lire la phrase. La lire, cela veut dire refaire en soi-même les démarches que, dans leur succession, tous les mots lus commandent. C'est dans l'accomplissement de ces démarches, dans cette expérience intérieure, que le sens de la phrase se donne à votre conscience. Une phrase ne peut avoir de sens si ce sens n'a pas d'abord été conscient chez le sujet qui l'a écrite ou prononcée. Quand celui-ci a disparu, la phrase est une suite de dessins graphiques dépourvue de sens effectif, jusqu'à ce que le sens oublié soit redevenu conscient chez un autre sujet.¹¹

Il en va de même du mythe et c'est d'une façon semblable que nous pouvons espérer de le comprendre. Certes, il faut au préalable s'être familiarisé avec le code linguistique dans lequel les différents récits en sont énoncés: dans le cas particulier, celui de la langue grecque; il faut aussi s'être mis en mémoire l'expérience culturelle dont il fut solidaire. Mais, cette préparation acquise, il faut encore lire le mythe; c'est-à-dire refaire en soi-même, les expériences vécues dont il est l'expression. Et c'est seulement dans une telle démarche, intérieure et subjective que son sens peut se donner à nous.¹²

3) Ce sens ai-je dit, est religieux; plus précisément encore, il est théologique. Mais le mot ne doit pas être mal compris. Jusqu'à une époque tardive, les Grecs n'exposent habituellement pas leur pensée sur les dieux, en termes conceptuels, comme la théologie chrétienne le fera. Le mythe est pour eux l'instrument spécifique de cette sorte d'exposé; les diseurs de mythes sont précisément à leurs yeux des *θεολόγοι*, des théologiens.

En comprenant le mythe comme l'énoncé d'une pensée religieuse, trouvant sa source et sa référence dans les expériences que les Grecs font d'une action divine à l'intérieur du monde, je me verrai peut être reprocher par des esprits positifs de faire ainsi de la métaphysique, c'est-à-dire, à leurs yeux, de fonder ma compréhension sur des objets dépourvus de réalité et, par conséquent, de ne rien comprendre du tout. Je crois être au contraire parfaitement objectif et scientifique, autant qu'on peut l'être en ces matières. Les Grecs ont eu de telles expériences; c'est un fait. L'historien des reli-

gions doit étudier les circonstances concrètes où elles ont eu lieu et tenter de déceler les facteurs sociaux et culturels qui en ont conditionné les modalités. Les Grecs eux-mêmes admettaient volontiers que le divin se montre ailleurs aux hommes sous d'autres aspects que chez eux; que d'autres peuples peuvent en appréhender des manifestations équivalentes à celles qu'ils perçoivent eux-mêmes mais les appeler sous d'autres noms et les représenter sous d'autres images. Du divin, ils distinguaient ainsi les expériences partielles que les hommes font de sa présence, à l'intérieur de sociétés différentes et en différents lieux, mais ils étaient convaincus de l'universalité du divin que les uns et les autres rencontrent ainsi, diversement; davantage encore, ils liaient le sens et la validité des conduites humaines à l'expérience de telles rencontres. C'est encore un fait. Déclarer: de telles rencontres sont illusoires, leurs dieux, ce divin n'existent pas; vouloir les réduire à des faits d'une autre sorte, sociaux ou psychologiques,¹³ par exemple, que l'on tient pour plus réels, c'est se prononcer sur la nature d'un réel caché derrière les phénomènes, soit donc précisément faire de la métaphysique. Je ne m'oppose pas à cela mais, quand on le fait, il faut le savoir et le dire, sans quoi on fait, à coup sûr, de la mauvaise métaphysique et de la mauvaise science.

Les esprits positifs pourraient me répliquer que, sans prononcer de jugements aussi radicaux, ils constatent simplement que les sciences ont progressé depuis deux mille ans; que nous avons une connaissance du monde, des êtres vivants, peut-être aussi des phénomènes sociaux, plus précise, plus étendue et plus efficace que les anciens Grecs. Je n'en disconviens pas mais en résulte-t-il que nous soyons fondés à soumettre leurs mythes à des règles inspirées de celles qui ont assuré le succès de nos sciences, pour déceler ainsi une vraie nature du mythe que les Grecs eux-mêmes auraient ignorée? La mythologie ne constitue pas à leurs yeux un système scientifique. Toute liée qu'elle soit incontestablement à leurs organisations et à leurs activités sociales, à leur technologie et à l'ensemble de leurs connaissances positives, ce qu'ils visent à élucider par elle c'est, en définitive, le sens de leur existence. Or les sciences ne nous apprennent pas le sens de l'existence humaine; ce n'est pas leur objet. Je note en outre que nous ne possédons plus aucun instrument commun, comparable à ce que le mythe fut chez les Anciens,

pour aider à notre méditation sur ce point. Dans ces conditions, il faut, me semble-t-il, quelque naïveté pour prétendre que nous savons mieux que les Grecs ce que furent les raisons de leurs conduites ou de leurs choix; que nous comprenons mieux qu'eux l'ensemble des mythes par lesquels ils ont tenté de les éclairer.

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¹ Le sens du récit mythique, partiellement indépendant de la forme dans laquelle il se trouve une fois exprimé, peut l'être une autre fois au moyen de phrases un peu différentes. Il arrive en effet que celui qui répète un mythe utilise des mots que son informateur n'avait pas employés. Il en va de même de tout message. Dans les domaines de l'histoire ou des sciences naturelles, par exemple, celui qui répète une information peut le faire de plusieurs façon, sans l'altérer. Le plus souvent toutefois, certains mots essentiels du message reçu lui demeurent indispensables et il les utilise effectivement, comme fait aussi celui qui répète un mythe. La distance qui sépare ainsi le sens du récit mythique de la forme précise de son énoncé ne diminue donc en aucune façon l'appartenance du mythe à la parole.

Lévi-Strauss veut tout à la fois traiter le mythe comme un code et le situer à un niveau distinct de ceux de la langue et de la parole; il est alors remarquable de le voir définir l'unité du code mythique, le mythème, comme une proposition (l'assignation d'un prédicat à un sujet forme une proposition), car toute proposition constitue précisément un message, même s'il est relativement pauvre et attend d'être complété. Il est vrai que Lévi-Strauss groupe plusieurs propositions dans l'unité d'un mythème; si il s'agit de propositions synonymes, elles composent simplement un ensemble de messages équivalents mais je crains que ce ne soit pas le cas. En constituant un mythème, il réunit des propositions dont les verbes, les sujets et les objets diffèrent et qui apparaissent à des moments divers dans un même récit (non chez plusieurs mais chez un seul narrateur). Il néglige donc les distinctions que le récit établit entre les personnages dont il parle et entre les événements qu'il raconte; il néglige en outre l'ordre de leur succession. Arbitraires, de telles négligences ne peuvent pas ne pas ne pas laisser échapper, dans l'énoncé du message, des éléments chargés de signification — quelle que soit au demeurant la différence qu'il convient d'établir entre le temps du mythe et celui de l'histoire.

Nous constaterons sans doute que la proposition mythique a une façon particulière de signifier, proche de celle du symbole; nous observerons aussi qu'en vertu de leur valeur symbolique, deux propositions différentes peuvent énoncer des messages convergents mais le récit lui-même signale alors cette convergence. Il emploie de mêmes noms propres dans les deux propositions, il leur assigne de mêmes sujets ou de mêmes objets et situe les événements qu'elles relatent à un même moment du temps mythique.

Cette particularité de l'énoncé mythique soulève évidemment des problèmes mais elle n'altère pas sa nature de message (voir note 10).

² Lorsqu'elle est découverte, l'union d'Oedipe avec sa mère provoque horreur et répulsion; Oedipe lui-même en restera souillé. Il convient toutefois de préciser que cette union n'est pas recherchée comme telle par Oedipe qui ne convoite point

la personne de Jocaste. Elle répond à plusieurs exigences impliquées dans l'ensemble du mythe thébain où celui d'Oedipe doit être situé. Pour le héros, elle est notamment une condition de son accès à la royauté, quand une victoire sur la Sphinge l'a qualifié pour l'exercice de cette charge.

³ S'il arrive qu'on apprenne un récit qu'on ignorait, par exemple.

⁴ Aucun récit n'expose la totalité des mythes mais ils ont tous été racontés. Un grand nombre d'entre eux restent vivants dans la mémoire de chaque individu qui peut les répéter à son gré, avec plus ou moins de détails sans doute. Spontanément, il situe un récit singulier dans l'ensemble ordonné de ceux qui sont ainsi présents à sa conscience.

⁵ Le mythe est religieux; cela n'exclut pas que les Grecs en aient fait différents emplois. Par la conduite ou par les propos qu'ils prêtent à Thésée, certains auteurs illustrent les vertus de la démocratie athénienne; ils utilisent ainsi le mythe à des fins politiques. Il ne faut toutefois pas s'y tromper: en recourant au symbole de Thésée pour exprimer une pensée politique, en mobilisant ainsi un héros lié à l'ensemble des mythes fondamentaux que j'ai évoqués, ils affirment que le projet démocratique athénien s'inscrit dans l'ordre sacré des choses. Et ce n'est point un artifice de leur part. Ils expriment une conviction profonde, liée au fait que les sociétés civiles et les communautés cultuelles coïncident, dans le monde hellénique, au point que la trahison peut y constituer une faute religieuse et la déchéance des droits civiques, l'*atimie*, une excommunication. Soyons donc prudents: ce qui nous paraît étranger à la religion peut ne l'avoir pas été pour les Grecs.

En formulant cette remarque, je ne veux pas dire que tous les emplois du mythe soient nécessairement inspirés par la piété. Les mythes proposent aux poètes des thèmes, comme leurs personnages fournissent aux peintres et aux sculpteurs des motifs, propres à faire valoir leur talent. Dès l'époque hellénistique, certains écrivains et certains artistes ont utilisé les fables, dans un dessein plus esthétique que religieux. La chose a pu se produire antérieurement. Au temps où l'écriture était encore peu répandue, je suis prêt à croire qu'il est arrivé que des aèdes racontent des mythes avant tout pour distraire leur auditoire et le charmer. Je ne méconnais donc point la fonction d'agrément que les mythes ont pu remplir mais elle ne suffit pas à expliquer tous les traits que nous devons leur reconnaître. C'est une fonction seconde ou dérivée, en considération de laquelle nous pouvons comprendre certains développements des récits mythiques, non leur existence même.

Sous le nom de Marie-Madeleine, des peintres ont pu se plaisir à représenter une femme et à rendre habilement ses gestes ou les mouvements de sa chevelure. Si la pécheresse repentante a ainsi été l'objet d'un traitement purement pictural, cela n'abolit pas le fait qu'elle revêt une signification dans un contexte religieux essentiel — bien qu'il soit occasionnellement négligé — et sans lequel elle n'aurait point d'existence. (Ce contexte existe dans la tradition chrétienne, bien que l'identification qu'elle a longtemps établie entre la pécheresse (Luc 7, 36-50) et Marie de Magdala (Luc 8, 2 etc.) soit peut-être abusive). De pareille façon les mythes sont religieux même s'il arrive qu'on les illustre ou les raconte sans vouloir toujours exprimer un message religieux.

⁶ Cf. J. Rudhardt. Cohérence et incohérence de la structure mythique: sa fonction symbolique. *Diogène* n. 77. Paris 1972. pp. 19-47.

⁷ En disant que le mythe trouve sa source dans une expérience religieuse, je ne me prononce ni sur l'origine lointaine des traditions mythiques ni sur la provenance des motifs ou des figures que le mythe utilise. Les premiers documents écrits nous mettent d'emblée en présence de traditions établies. Comme nous n'avons aucune information sérieuse sur ce point, il me paraît vain de chercher comment

les premières traditions mythiques se sont constituées au cours de la préhistoire, même si nous pouvons observer, dans quelques cas privilégiés, comment des traditions se sont ultérieurement enrichies ou transformées.

Les figures ou les motifs des mythes grecs sont de diverses provenances. Quelques — uns dérivent du souvenir d'événements historiques que nous pouvons plus ou moins identifier; d'autres furent empruntées aux mythes de peuples égéens ou asiatiques avec lesquels les Hellènes se trouvèrent en contact. D'autres ressemblent à des motifs que nous rencontrons dans la mythologie de peuples, à la fois très éloignés des Grecs dans l'espace ou dans le temps et très éloignés les uns des autres; de telles ressemblances nous incitent à penser qu'ils procèdent de dispositions psychologiques communes à tous les hommes. Il est probable que plusieurs motifs ont encore d'autres sources. La pluralité des phénomènes dont les figures ou les motifs du mythe grec tirent ainsi leur origine nous interdit d'expliquer ce mythe lui-même par l'un quelconque d'entre eux. Au reste, figures et motifs ne le constituent pas; ils forment seulement une matière qu'il utilise et met en œuvre. Dans cette mise en œuvre, il obéit à des lois structurelles qui s'imposent à tout système de signes et à tout récit mais, en raison de leur généralité, ces lois n'éclairent point ce qui en fait la spécificité. Pour comprendre le mythe hellénique, il ne suffit pas de considérer la matière qui s'y trouve employée ni la façon dont elle est mise en forme; il s'agit essentiellement de déceler ce qui inspire cette mise en forme et cet emploi, de pressentir l'intention dans laquelle les Grecs ont constamment repris et réélaboré leur mythe, de percevoir ce que leur pensée a visé à travers lui. Cette intention, cette visée me paraissent naître et se définir dans une expérience religieuse.

⁸ Cf. Jean Rudhardt. Les mythes grecs relatifs à l'instauration du sacrifice: les rôles corrélatifs de Prométhée et de son fils Deucalion. *Museum Helveticum*, 27 (1970) pp. 1-15; A propos de l'hymne homérique à Déméter: la répartition des *τμαί*, articulation centrale des systèmes mythiques grecs; le rapt de Perséphone considéré comme un épisode de cette répartition. *Museum Helveticum*, 35 (1978) pp. 1-17.

⁹ Puis de la société européenne, par le jeu des traductions.

¹⁰ En fait, le problème est plus complexe que je le dis ici. Dans l'élaboration de sa pensée, l'individu choisit des mots de la langue commune pour nommer mentalement un concept qu'il est en train de former, une idée qu'il entrevoit, une impression qu'il éprouve. En nommant cet objet encore fuyant dans le flux de sa méditation, il le modifie, il lui confère une identité; à la limite, nous pourrions dire qu'il le constitue. De ce point de vue, le code social conditionne son expérience intérieure. Mais en utilisant ainsi un mot commun, il lui donne un contenu original qu'il n'avait peut-être jamais eu; davantage encore, il peut arriver qu'aucun mot existant ne semble à l'individu convenir pour désigner ce qu'il pressent et veut identifier; il fabrique alors un mot nouveau. De ce point de vue, l'expérience intérieure constitue le code nécessaire à sa propre élaboration. Ainsi le développement de la pensée est solidaire de l'acte par lequel on commence au moins à l'exprimer et celui-ci, solidaire d'une opération par laquelle on utilise le code commun et le modifie tout à la fois. Au niveau de cette élaboration, la distinction entre le code et le message s'atténue.

Il en va de même, lorsque l'individu utilise le mythe comme un instrument de sa pensée mais cet emploi présente pourtant des particularités. Message traditionnel, le mythe est réassumé par la pensée individuelle à laquelle il impose sa forme et son développement; en récompense, il doit sa vie et son sens à de telles activités personnelles. Mais l'individu ne se contente pas toujours de l'écouter et de le reproduire; toute façonnée qu'elle soit par la tradition, son expérience intérieure peut y résis-

ter; dans ce cas, l'individu réélabore le message reçu, pour exprimer une pensée originale. Dans cet exercice, il utilise les mots du message comme les éléments d'un code; il peut le faire car ils sont éléments du code linguistique commun, ainsi que nous l'avons constaté, et il peut les modifier, comme le penseur peut dans une certaine mesure créer des mots nouveaux ou modifier la valeur des mots communs, au gré des exigences de sa méditation. Mais tout n'est pas dit ainsi. Nous avons observé que dans le mythe, certains noms propres évoquent des images hétérogènes, constamment alternantes, auxquelles la pensée ne peut s'arrêter et qu'elle doit dépasser. Ils appartiennent à la langue commune, dans cette façon même de signifier, et se trouvent ainsi définis, par des systèmes de relations et d'oppositions analogues à ceux qui définissent les autres mots de la langue. Ils s'en distinguent toutefois et leur emploi mythique se caractérise par un trait essentiel. Le mythe ne livre jamais aux individus de tels noms propres isolément; il les leur propose dans des contextes élaborés, où tous les mots employés revêtent eux-mêmes une valeur imagée. En utilisant le mythe, l'individu n'opère pas simplement avec les mots du code mais avec des éléments de récits, tout constitués. Et c'est seulement à l'intérieur de ces entités narratives qu'il joue avec les éléments du code. Or ces entités narratives que les individus délimitent diversement sont reçues, intériorisées, reproduites ou remaniées par eux comme des messages, messages partiels sans doute et qui requièrent d'être complétés mais comme des messages et non comme les éléments d'un code.

¹¹ On a programmé des machines électroniques de telle façon qu'associant des mots d'une façon aléatoire mais selon certains schémas, elles composent des phrases auxquelles des lecteurs croient reconnaître un sens. C'est une illusion. Ces machines ont simulé la production d'un sens, elles ne l'ont pas produit; elles n'avaient nulle intention de dire quoi que ce soit. Les lecteurs attribuent à la phrase frabriquée le sens qu'aurait une phrase pareille, si elle avait été écrite ou prononcée par un sujet conscient.

¹² Une telle préparation reste en fait toujours incomplète. La démarche par laquelle nous essayons de mimer ainsi l'expérience ancienne est périlleuse. Nous courrons grans risque de nous y fourvoyer et de ne point percevoir le véritable sens du mythe grec. Si nous ne la tentons pas, nous pouvons en revanche être assuré de ne jamais le percevoir.

¹³ Que l'on se réfère à une psychologie de l'intelligence ou à une psychologie de l'affectivité.

SYMBOLS OF MARGINALITY IN THE BIOGRAPHIES
OF RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR INNOVATORS

*A comparative study of the lives of Jesus, Waldes, Booth,
Kimbangu, Buddha, Mohammed and Marx*

ANDRÉ DROOGERS

With his books 'The Ritual Process' (1969) and 'Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors' (1974), Victor Turner has immensely stimulated the study of marginal or liminal situations. His field-work among the Ndembu of Zambia led him to search for the general characteristics of these situations. Many of his examples were drawn from the field of religion.

In this article, I will follow the path paved by Turner and elaborate on the quasi-universal presence of marginal symbols in the biographies of religious leaders. My inspiration comes from Turner as well as from my own field-work, also in an African context. While studying the boys' initiation ritual and other rites of passage among the Wagenia (Zaire), I discovered the recurring presence of a number of symbols which indicated the temporal marginal position of persons undergoing the ritual (Droogers 1980). I was surprised to find that some of these symbols were also used in the biographies of religious leaders. Despite their diversity, cultures apparently turn to the same type of symbol to indicate the marginal position of people. These symbols may be present in the facts, but may also be of an artificial, constructed nature. The biographers may have based their writings on facts, but they also sometimes introduced marginal symbols in order to standardize the style of the report. However, for our purpose, this distinction does not seem to be of importance. This paper studies marginal symbols, whether taken from historical reality or not.

The marginal symbols studied here, as I first encountered them in the Wagenia rites of transition, are: nature (versus culture), travelling and provisional lodging (versus sedentary life), non-violence (versus violence), solidarity or Turner's core concept *communitas* (versus hierarchy), anonymity and humility (versus name

and fame), isolation and seclusion (versus life in the heart of society), hardship and ordeal (versus comforts), dirt (versus purity), poverty and begging (versus wealth), fasting (versus eating). Each of these marginal symbols is an inversion of the normal, the generally accepted. Moreover, boundaries in time and space are suitable transitional symbols (e.g. night versus day, water versus land).

In summarizing the biographies of some religious innovators, I will focus on the presence of these marginal symbols. Ironically it is the marginality of the leader which often has made him popular, despite his deviating way of life. Sometimes the leader remains in the margin, in other cases he is brought back into the center, which his marginal position was a negation and an inversion of. The religious innovators studied and compared here are: Jesus, Waldes, Booth, Kimbangu, Buddha and Mohammed. The comparison is extended to the biography of a secular innovator: Marx.

Jesus

Nearly all the marginal symbols mentioned above are present in the life of Jesus, as it is rendered by the evangelists. His birth is surrounded by inversions. He is born to a virgin. This does not happen at his parents' home, but while they are travelling, and even then not in an inn but among the animals in a stable. His presence is observed by marginal people only: shepherds, and travelling sages from the East. When he is brought to the temple for circumcision, only Anna and Simeon, two people at the margin between life and death, understand his importance. He has to flee abroad, to Egypt. During his life he remains a marginal person. He is not married, he does not belong to any faction within the theological elite. He wanders through the country with fishermen as followers. His first public appearance is a visit to another marginal person: John the Baptist, who baptizes him in the Jordan. His first miracle is worked during a marriage feast, a rite of transition. He has a weakness for people in the margin of society: children, whores, publicans. He does not seem to like rich people. He is tempted when fasting in the desert, and on that occasion rejects absolute power. Every now and then, he brings about inversions: he picks ears during sabbath, he heals the sick, and he brings dead persons back to life. In the

beatitudes, suffering minorities are declared blessed. He tells stories about God, who is depicted as absent, a lord gone abroad. Even the universal law of reciprocity is subjected to inversion: “an eye for an eye” is replaced by “turn the other cheek”. Hating the enemy is transformed into loving him. Power becomes subservient to solidarity. The master himself serves as a slave, washing the feet of his disciples. He states that he has not even a stone to put his head on.

He makes his entry into Jerusalem on a donkey, for a king an unbecoming animal. After a last supper he visits a garden. He dies on a cross, under the authority of a foreign ruler, between two criminals, marginal people. Though the sign above his head says that he is the king of the Jews, he wears a thorny crown. The last element in the chain of inversions is his resurrection. He will live on eternally. The first witnesses of his resurrection are women, not men.

Waldes (Hardmeier 1960, Wakefield 1974: 43-47)

On a nice day in the spring of 1173, Waldes, a wealthy French merchant from the city of Lyons, experiences how a friend suddenly dies during a pleasant conversation. This fixes his thoughts on the question: “what would happen to me, if I were to appear so unexpectedly before God?” He consults a theologian, who quotes Jesus: “If you want to be perfect, go, sell everything you have, and give to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven; and come, follow me.” Waldes decides to follow this advice. He takes measures to ensure that his family will not suffer because of his behaviour. He returns the interest his debtors have paid him. Three times a week, he distributes food to the poor, who welcome this as there is a famine at the time. Waldes becomes a preacher, appealing to people to follow his example. “I served the creation instead of serving the creator”. In his view, the ideal of the monks should be followed by laymen too. He orders a translation of the psalms and the gospels into the language of the people. When Waldes has nothing left of his former wealth, he starts begging, much to the irritation of his wife, who appeals to the archbishop to have her husband ask food from his wife only.

In 1182, Waldes has to go into exile, as his preaching has upset the church authorities. Waldes is viewed as a competitor of the clergy, and not even an educated or ordained one. Moreover, he keeps criticizing the richness of the church. As a result, Waldes and his followers have to travel around the country. They preach wherever they come. In 1184, they are excommunicated as heretics. Thus persecuted and obliged to go underground, they withdraw to remote areas such as the valleys of the Italian Alps. Their way of life is a very simple one. It is their habit to sleep in cellars on simple beds. They refuse to go into the army. Women are allowed to serve as preachers. The Waldenses reject the priestly monopoly on the distribution of salvation.

Booth (Sandall 1947, 1950)

On an evening in June 1865, in the streets of London's East End, William Booth, then 36 years old, an unaffiliated evangelist of Methodist origin, hears a group of other evangelists preaching. They are standing on the waste land in front of a pub called 'The Blind Beggar'. His interest in converting people makes Booth listen with special attention. These evangelists are of Huguenot origin, refugees from France. When they are almost finished with their program, the audience is requested to give a testimony. Booth does not let the occasion go by and addresses the public. As a result, the Huguenot group invites him to join them in their campaign.

The group has a tent in a former Quaker cemetery. Booth, who had once been a pawnbroker, knows the kind of people who live in the East End, and has a special gift for drawing their attention. During this campaign, he makes converts. He finally decides to stay with this team.

Like Waldes, Booth is critical of the church. He is convinced that the working class cannot be reached by or through the churches. Therefore, he uses all kind of secular halls for his work: theatres, dancing halls, even a stable. And of course there are meetings in the open air. He and his friends often meet with scorn and hatred. Almost from the beginning, women play an important role in the movement. Booth sees himself as an apostle to the heathens of East London. His group also distributes food and clothes. As a consequence of the Civil War in the United States, an economic de-

pression aggravates the misery of the people. In 1866 a cholera epidemic causes many deaths.

At first, converts are referred to the churches, but it becomes clear that they seldom go there, and if they go, they often are not welcome. Besides, Booth needs collaborators. Thus, the intermediary movement becomes an institution in itself: from 1878 on, it is known as the Salvation Army. Booth, once the “general superintendent”, becomes the general of a non-violent army. As this era is full of war and rumours of war, the symbolism was obvious. About this time, the hymn “Onwards Christian soldiers” is composed. Moreover, Booth’s authority is strong and fits the hierarchical position he takes. Uniforms had been worn for some time already, and now became the standard garb.

Kimbangu (Martin 1975, Ustorf 1975)

Marginality also dominates the life of Simon Kimbangu, a Zairean prophet who, in 1921, at the age of about 32, brings about a religious movement which nowadays exists under the name of the Church of Jesus Christ on Earth through the Prophet Simon Kimbangu. As a young man, Kimbangu had worked for some time as a teacher in a Baptist mission school. In 1918 he repeatedly hears a voice, telling him ‘I am Christ, my servants are unfaithful. I have chosen you to bear witness before your brethren and to convert them. Tend my flock.’ Kimbangu flees from this call by moving to the capital. But the calls continue. After some time, he has to return to his native village. Times are difficult, the flu is rampant and in the aftermath of World War I there is an economic depression.

In April 1921, Kimbangu accepts his mission and succeeds in healing a sick woman. Several other healings follow. Kimbangu preaches in order to start a religious and moral revival among the Christians. Moreover, his behaviour reflects his concern with the misery of the people. His biographers disagree as to whether he took an explicit anti-white stance. At any rate, his success as a preacher and healer is enormous, and this certainly has political consequences. The message is understood by the people as having political implications. In an eschatological way, liberation from colonial oppression is expected.

When people do not show up at work in order to go to the new prophet, their white employers complain to the authorities. An administrator comes to Kimbangu's village. Kimbangu now presents himself as a leader, wearing a staff as a sign of his authority, a symbol proper to his own culture in which prophetic leaders were not unknown. As part of the reception, Kimbangu reads the story of David and Goliath to the white administrator. A few weeks later, an attempt is made to arrest Kimbangu. During the skirmishes, he succeeds in escaping. For three months he hides himself, part of the time in the bush. He sometimes has to sleep in the open air. After hearing God's voice again, he returns to his village, where he surrenders voluntarily and without violence. He is condemned to death but the death sentence is commuted to life imprisonment. He lives in exile up till his death in 1951, without ever having seen his family again.

During his exile, the movement he started keeps resurging every now and then, often with a distinctly anti-white attitude. In the fifties, Kimbangu's sons organise the various groups claiming to stand in the tradition of their father into a church. After the independence of the country in 1960, this church loses its political flavour and becomes an independent church. In 1972, a revival is brought about within the Kimbanguist church by retreats into the forest lasting for several days.

Buddha (Saddhatissa 1976)

Leaving the religious innovators in the Christian tradition, we now turn to a religious leader from another cultural tradition and epoch. Marginality is not restricted to Christianity.

In 560 B.C. the Buddha is born, prematurely, while his royal mother is on her way to give birth to her child at her parents' palace. She is attracted to a garden where she intends to rest for a while, and her son is born there. The name given to the baby is Siddharta. He is supposed to become a king, but some wise men predict that the prince may become a buddha instead. This will only happen if the prince witnesses subsequently four special signs represented by four (clearly marginal) people: an old man, a sick man, a dead man and an ascetic. His father, the king, does everything he can to prevent these meetings. Meanwhile, Siddharta

leads a happy life. He marries and his wife becomes pregnant. At about that time of his life Siddharta, almost 29 years old, meets the four persons mentioned above in spite of his father's precautions. The first three make him wonder whether suffering is inevitable, and the fourth provides an answer to this question. He decides to follow the example of the ascetic. The very moment Siddharta decides to leave the palace, he becomes the father of a son, and is thus subject to a double, contrary transition. During the feast given on the occasion of the birth of his son, he falls asleep. He wakes up to find everybody sleeping, and at midnight (a boundary in time) he leaves the palace. When he comes to the border of his father's kingdom, a river (a boundary in space), he shaves his head and puts on orange clothes. His name is changed into Gautama, after the name of his family. Thus he goes searching for a possibility to escape from the eternal return of suffering, wandering around the country, living as a beggar, and striving to be released from misery through meditation.

Yet he is not satisfied with his ascetic teachers. He searches on independently. His life is full of inversions: he eats raw food, he fasts, he holds his breath for long periods. In summer he exposes himself to the sun, in the winter he takes ice-cold baths. He is clad in ragged clothes. When the moon is new or full, he sits all alone in mortuary grounds, without fear of spirits or wild animals. Gautama leads this kind of life for six years, then collapses. A shepherd finds him, gives him milk and takes care of him. Then comes the day of enlightenment. Gautama is sitting under a tree in order to meditate. As she thinks he is a god, a woman who has just given birth makes a thanksgiving offering to him in a golden bowl. Gautama takes this bowl to the river, takes a bath and eats. He puts the bowl on the water, saying 'If today I am to attain full enlightenment, may this golden bowl swim upstream'. This happens. Gautama spends the rest of that day in the forest along the river bank. In the evening he sits down under a ficus tree, later to be known as the tree of enlightenment. The day is his birthday and so, like then, the moon is full.

Till his death, forty-five years after that day, the Buddha, as he is called now by his biographers, proclaims his message. Suffering will end if one ends one's attachment to the world. The ideal is to be

free from desire and to have no fixed home. One of the rules given by the Buddha is a prohibition of killing. The trade in arms, living beings, flesh, drinks and poison is also forbidden. It is striking that the Buddha and his disciples often prefer to stay in gardens, parks and forests. During the rainy season they go into retreat. Among his adepts are also untouchables, marginals in their own society who had to earn a living by disposing of filth, excrements and animal carcasses. The Buddha rejects the caste system, and is therefore disliked by the Brahmins of the time, who view him as dangerous and subversive.

Seven years after Siddharta has become Gautama, he returns to his father's city and goes begging on the streets. His father is irritated, and the son gives in. However, the father becomes a follower of the son. The Buddha's seven-year-old son is ordained a monk. The Buddha's step-brother, who is to be proclaimed successor to their father, also becomes a monk, a decision he takes on the day of his wedding. Once again two contrasting transitions take place. At the exact age of 80, the Buddha dies. The moon is full.

Mohammed (Guillaume 1968, Rodinson 1973)

The accounts of Mohammed's life do not lack symbols of inversion and transition. The moment Mohammed is conceived, a white light shining between his father's eyes disappears. Around the time he is born, in approximately the year 571, his father dies. Therefore it is more difficult to find a nurse for the child, as the absence of the father implies that the salary is not guaranteed. Halima, a member of a nomadic group suffering from a famine, who at that moment has not even milk for her own son, decides nevertheless to become a nurse to Mohammed. As soon as she lets Mohammed drink from her, her breasts overflow with milk, and she has enough for her own son too. Moreover, her aged she-camel gives milk again, and her she-ass, who was extremely slow, now runs so fast the others cannot keep up. The famine is over for Halima's group. She suckles Mohammed during the first two years of his life. He stays with her till the age of six, a city child among nomads.

When Mohammed is six, his mother dies and he goes to live with his father's relatives. He grows up, becomes a merchant, remains a

bachelor for some time, and finally marries his employer, a rich widow.

In these days, wars are raging and some prophets announce the end of times. Mohammed, now in his thirties, is concerned about these developments. He adopts the habit of holding nocturnal retreats in a cave outside Mecca, in an inhospitable region. After some time he experiences God's presence in visions. He hears a voice: 'You are God's messenger'. There are more messages and visions. At the age of about 39, Mohammed starts reciting inspired texts. This is a physically painful experience, even more so as Mohammed is not certain of the value of his experiences.

Visions are normal in those days, but Mohammed's visions distinguish themselves from those of other prophets by their criticism of the current religious and social situation. Monotheism is favoured by him, whereas polytheism was normal at that time. Mohammed's messages pity those who are the victims of the rich and of the leaders. The overpowering almightiness of Allah is stressed over and against the vain human power. Man is subject to the last judgment. Then his wealth will not be of much use to him, and he might regret not having given more to the poor. One of the messages is a reproach to Mohammed himself for having been unkind to a blind beggar when he himself was speaking to a rich man. According to the tradition, Mohammed once makes a miraculous nocturnal trip to Jerusalem, while his body stays in Mecca. The archangel Gabriel is his guide on a visit to heaven.

The message of the prophet is accepted and more and more people believe his words. Most of his followers seem to have been young and socially weak. The messages imply that God is interested in man without taking into account wealth, kinship or tribal affiliation. The leaders of Meccan society do not appreciate Mohammed's message, especially his monotheism. His followers are persecuted. Mohammed himself is protected by his clan. The messages continue to come. A ritual is developed. The attitude during prayer is one of total humility. Prayers at that time are said during the night, at sunrise and at sunset.

Mohammed's message also has moral sides. The Arab ideal of the arrogant, careless, stout and violent man does not fit into the new faith. The value of a human life increases. Endless hospitality

is changed into organised charity. Those who are afraid of no one must fear Allah.

In 619 Mohammed's wife dies, as well as his foster father. He loses the protection of his clan. The Meccans are stubbornly against this man, who proclaims himself to be Allah's Messenger. In the meantime new converts have been made in the oasis of Medina. More and more followers take hide there and finally in 622 the prophet himself goes there too. On their way to Medina, the prophet and his two companions have to hide in a cave for three days. Then they travel on to Medina, taking a detour. Mohammed's presence in Medina puts an end to the internal conflicts among the local tribes inhabiting this oasis. The new faith brings a new solidarity.

From now on, Mohammed is to lead a less marginal life. The conflict with Mecca is consciously sought. When it comes to a battle, Mohammed and his followers win. This is seen as a sign that Allah is with them. Medinan society increasingly turns into a state with a rather absolute ruler. Military activity becomes normal, laws are made, taxes have to be paid and the police maintain law and order. The movement slows down into institutionalization. The prophet becomes a politician. Islam fills the vacuum brought about by the defeat of Byzantium by the Persians. Finally, in 630, Mohammed is also honoured in his city of origin. But when he stays in Mecca, the prophet always lives in a tent, thus retaining marginal traits. During this part of his life, messages keep being revealed, but they are more prosaic and practical, in contrast to the earlier more poetic and spiritual texts. In 632 Mohammed dies, at the heat of noon.

Marx (Banning 1961, Blumenberg 1965, McLellan 1973, 1975)

If religion is defined (Yinger 1970: 3-16) in a substantial way, taking in to account what it *is*, and making use of notions like the supernatural, Marx should not be included in this list of religious innovators. Yet a functional definition focusing on what religion *does*, e.g. solve "ultimate" problems, would allow for his biography to be discussed here. But even if we leave this problem aside, the very presence of marginal symbols in Marx's biography justifies its inclusion here.

Karl Marx is born in Trier in 1818 to Jewish parents. Marx's father has just tried to escape anti-Jewish discrimination by becoming a member of the Evangelical Church. Marx grows up as a gifted but problematic son. A secret engagement at the age of 18 causes a conflict with his father, a conflict which is still not settled when his father dies two years later. For a long time, relations with his family suffer from this row.

As a student, Marx is heavily influenced by Hegel's philosophy, even though he ends up in polemics even with young critical Hegelians. Because of his radical criticism of religion and the church and of the Prussian government, Marx spoils his chances for a successful academic career. He works for some time as a journalist for a Rhineland paper, but leaves for Paris when the paper comes under severe Prussian censorship. He marries after having been engaged for seven years.

In Paris he lives for some time in a commune, but this experiment fails. He begins to combine his philosophical interests with the study of economics. He gets acquainted with French socialists and meets Friedrich Engels. After a year, Marx is expelled from France at the request of the Prussian government. He moves to Brussels. In the meantime, he has given up the Prussian nationality. Later on he will try in vain to become a naturalized British subject. Till the end of his life, he has to live as a stateless political refugee. As Shaw remarked, Marx stands outside the normal German and English societies of his days. He belongs nowhere. As a consequence of the revolution of 1848 in France, Marx is allowed to return to France. In Germany too the revolutionary times make Marx welcome. For almost a year he lives in Cologne where he runs a newspaper. Then, with the argument that he is stateless, he is sent into exile once again. He returns to Paris but travels on to London where he is to stay till his death in 1883. All these voluntary and involuntary travels teach him what deprivation and poverty is. To him it is 'a long sleepless night of exile'. The unstable financial position of his family is caused not only by unbalanced spending but also by careless generosity. Engels is a lifelong friend and financial help. For a long time Marx patronizes the pawnbroker, even to the point where he sometimes cannot leave his house for lack of decent clothes. The family goes through several crises. Three young

children die. When the maid becomes pregnant, Marx is supposed to be the biological father, but Engels serves as the father at the registrar's office. By the end of the sixties the financial difficulties have more or less been overcome. But then illness is a new cause of misery. During the last year of his life, Marx travels a lot in search of a cure for his ailments.

Himself in a marginal position within European society, he also writes about permanently marginal people. The worker is estranged from his product, from his human nature, from his fellowmen and from himself. The lowest class in society is the *Lumpenproletariat*: 'people without a definite trade, vagabonds, people without a hearth or a home'. This involuntary marginal existence will be replaced by a voluntary marginality: 'to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic'.

Hegel's dialectics have influenced Marx even in his style. Inversions are a favorite way of expressing himself. After a transitional period of proletarian dictatorship, capitalist society will have been transformed into a classless society of solidarity. It is 'a categorical imperative to overthrow any constellation in which man is a humiliated, enslaved, abandoned, despised being...'. 'It is not the consciousness of men which determines their being, but the other way around their social being which determines their consciousness'. 'Just as religion does not make man, but man makes his religion, so the constitution does not make the people, but the people make the constitution'.

Typically enough, Marx does not live to see his oeuvre as he planned it completed. The system is so enormous that he can only put the beginning into writing. His manner of working is restless. Sometimes after a month he already disagrees with what he has written.

Marx never founds a party, and when French socialists make free use of his ideas, his comment is 'as far as I am concerned, I am not a Marxist'. During a certain period of his life, Marx is active in all kinds of, mostly clandestine, organisations. But there are also periods when he and Engels are totally isolated from what is going on in socialist circles. His favorite motto is 'de omnibus dubitandum' — 'doubt everything'. In 1871 he writes to a friend: 'I have

the honour to be at this moment the most abused and threatened man in London'. He continues to proclaim his ideas, without being bothered by the fact that nobody is listening any more. It is only after his death that Marx's ideas are popularised.

Conclusion

Most of the marginal symbols that were found in the boys' initiation ritual of the Wagenia also occur in the biographies of the six religious innovators and one secular innovator as summarized above. The results of the comparison are included in an annexed table. It is clear that not all the Wagenia symbols are found in the lives of the persons discussed here. Human meaning-makers may draw from a common fund, but they certainly are free to make their own selection. To formulate laws for culture seems to lead to flaws. The universal and the unique go together.

We met with several kinds of inversions. Most of the men discussed here did not follow the predictable course their life seemed to take. Some of them started their religious leadership with a period of seclusion, others had to pay afterwards with isolation and exile for their public activities. All of them met with disapproval from the established leadership. They all had people from the margins of society among their followers. In all cases, solidarity was part of the message. As far as we know, these innovators often lived in an era of crisis, in the political, economic or medical sense. In a way this supports Musgrove's thesis that 'Counter cultures arise with steep population growth and intensive migration associated with great economic transformations. In these circumstances traditional social bonds are disrupted and old statuses brought into question' (1974: 196). Turner writes in a similar vein when he remarks that 'millenarian and revivalistic movements... originate in periods when societies are in liminal transition between major orderings of social structural relations' (1974: 53).

Poverty played a role at some moment in the lives of all these men. In five cases out of seven, travelling and wandering was characteristic at some time during the life of the leader. Not all of them remained in the marginal position they occupied at a decisive moment in their life. Mohammed's success drew him from the margin into the centre of his society, the others remained marginal in some way, though sometimes in an institutionalized manner.

Almost all of them had their decisive experience when they were in their thirties: perhaps a period of transition in a man's life.

For our purpose, the content and style of the biographies were most important, not their truth. It is the image people have of the lives of their leaders which counts, not the lives themselves. Yet one observation should be made. From the lives of the innovators who have lived relatively recently, we can see that marginality is not just a literary artificial type of symbolism. It is in some form a real presence in their lives, sometimes even in an accidental way. It is significant that these sometimes seemingly unimportant details have been remembered and have found their way into the chronicles. This is especially clear from the biographies of Booth and Marx. The experience of reality is a source of inspiration for ritual and myth. The local manner of narrating reinforces the transformation of historical events into stylized legends and myths.

Innovations prosper in the margin of society. It is clear from the life of Marx that this does not necessarily lead to religious innovation. Yet religion often flourishes in the margin, for one thing because it itself deals with the rim of existence. It is often couched in negative terms and concepts, which express an alternative to the "normal" way of life. These religious innovators not only lived in the margin of their society, but also in the margin between man and divinity. Durkheim (1912: 65) identified the sacred as forbidden and separate. According to a functional definition of religion, Marx is not a total stranger in the company of religious innovators, even though he arrived at an anti-religious conclusion. Like the others, he was concerned with the ultimate problems of human life.

If Van Baal (1971: 219ff.) is right in maintaining that religion offers a solution to the fundamental contradiction of the human condition, namely that man is at the same time subject and object, it follows that marginality is almost a definitional characteristic of man. Man is a lonely observer, standing at a distance from the observed, and at the same time part of the universe, even its product. Not only anthropologists are participants and observers: this position is fundamental of man. He may feel at home in society and even in nature, but may also experience his universe as outside him, over and against him. At some stage in their lives, the innovators whose biographies we have been discussing have felt this fundamental human loneliness.

According to Van Baal, religion offers a possibility to re-establish communication. In a personal relation to his God, man belongs in a unique way, and as a creature he belongs to creation, together with his fellow creatures. By giving names and meanings to his universe, man feels at home. By using symbols, he builds a bridge between himself and his universe. Symbols make for communication. Communication establishes participation.

Yet this bridge is vulnerable. Disagreement on accepted meanings destroys consensus. New bridges have to be constructed. Man's capacity to attach meaning through symbols may offer him a spiritual home, but it also makes him restless when new symbols and meanings present themselves. The more a person stands outside the mainstream of his time, the more he is apt to be confronted with innovations. If these innovations become accepted in his society, an end is put to the innovator's loneliness, but the risk involved is that the innovator may not live to see his ideas accepted. Yet even accepted ideas may someday be subject to criticism when a new cycle announces itself. New innovators refuse the accepted. Repetition is replaced by creativity, routine by new *élan*. If religious innovation prospers because of man's fundamental marginality, it no longer comes as a surprise that persons in ritual transition and innovators are surrounded by the same type of symbols. Religious innovators have to go through their private rite of transition in order to be initiated into their new role. Cultures make an economical use of the means by which they express marginality. As life itself offers the raw material for cultural expression, the stock of symbolic means is not unlimited. Despite cultural differences, a relatively small number of symbols keeps recurring, even though the margin of society is the optimal setting for creative man.

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TABLE

The occurrence of marginal symbols in Wagania ritual and in the lives of religious and secular innovators

	Wagania rites of passage	Jesus	Waldes	Booth	Kimbangu	Buddha	Mohammed	Marx
nature, the open air, gardens, parks	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
wandering, travelling	+	+	+			+	+	+
non-violence	+	+	+	+	+	+		
solidarity	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
anonymity, humility	+	+	+	+		+	+	
isolation, seclusion	+	+	+		+	+	+	+
hardship, ordeal	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
dirt	+					+		
special clothes	+			+	+	+		
poverty, begging	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
fasting	+	+				+	+	
shaving head hair	+					+		
boundaries/margins in time	+	+				+	+	
boundaries/margins in space	+	+	+	+		+	+	
contact with marginal people		+	+	+	+	+	+	+
marginals among follo- wers		+	+	+	+	+	+	+
era of crisis		+	+	+	+		+	+
strained relations with establishment		+	+	+	+	+	+	+

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EARLY FOREBODINGS OF THE DEATH OF BUDDHISM*

DAVID WELLINGTON CHAPPELL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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It is well known that the great Japanese reformation of Buddhism during the Kamakura period (1185-1333) took place in a climate of crisis. A visible symbol of this was the widespread feeling that Buddhism had entered its final period (*mappō*). Honen (1133-1212), Shinran (1173-1262), and Nichiren (1222-1282) all used the idea of *mappō*¹ to justify and explain the radical departures that they felt were necessary and which in each case resulted in an important new school of Buddhism. They echoed one another in proclaiming that traditional Buddhism was on its last legs and that people of this final period no longer had the capacity to understand or practice Buddhism. But instead of leading to despair, the acceptance of the idea of the death of Buddhism actually stimulated these Buddhist leaders to establish new forms for this period of emergency.

Fortunately, within the Buddhist tradition itself was the prediction that these “last days” would occur. Thus, the innovators of Kamakura were able to affirm the Buddhist tradition while simultaneously changing it. The prediction by Buddhists that Buddhism would die out is not just a curious and creative aberration which arose in Japan. Rather, it is a theme which Buddhists had found meaningful and useful at various times in Buddhist history. It is intriguing and exciting to reflect on the psychological, social and religious conditions which gave rise to this idea in various periods of history, as well as on the fact that Buddhism has been so adaptable and long-lived while simultaneously predicting its own demise.

In order to gain a proper perspective for appreciating the various ramifications of this idea, an historical overview should be established. Japanese Buddhists inherited the concept of the end of true Buddhism (*mappō*) from Chinese thinkers such as Tao-ch'ō (562-645), who in turn had adopted it to rationalize his own religious practices. However, the origins of the idea ultimately rest in the early forebodings of Indian Buddhists. While numerous studies have been made by Japanese scholars on the Japanese experience of *mappō*, far less attention has been given to the idea as it developed in China, while only Lamotte and Kumoi have given serious attention to its origins in India. Therefore, as the first step in understanding the meaning of *mappō* for Buddhists, it is important to re-examine the source of this idea in India and to trace its early development and subsequent transmission to China. This is the purpose of the present paper.

Five Reasons for the Disappearance of Buddhism

It is striking to find in the earliest texts of Buddhism the prediction that one day Buddhism will disappear. Of course, since the Buddha taught that everything is in flux, and everything that arises must also pass away, it is consistent to apply that to Buddhism as well. As Étienne Lamotte has pointed out, the Buddha's teaching of causal relationships is considered to be unchanging.² But this teaching does not exist only in the absolute (*paramārtha*). Since it is learned, followed, and taught by people, it also exists in the realm of change (*saṃvṛti*). As such it also is subsumed under the universal principle of causality.³ It can arise in the consciousness of people under certain conditions, and because of a change of circumstances it may also pass away from their minds.

Kumoi Shōzen, the noted Pali scholar, has provided a succinct and helpful overview of the earliest development in Buddhism of the idea that the True Dharma of the Buddha would one day decline and disappear. He also suggests that it was unavoidable that one day the Buddhist concept of conditioned origination and change should be applied to the understanding and practice of Buddhism itself.⁴ In his research, he found five different categories of texts which express the circumstances of this decline.

1. First of all is the well-known story of Mahāpajāpatī, the aunt and foster mother of the Buddha. Now a widow, she came to the Buddha in Banyan Tree Park at Kapilavatthu and asked three times whether she could go forth into the homeless life and become a follower of his Dharma. Having refused her three times, the Buddha then set out for Vesāli. Undaunted, Mahāpajāpatī cut off her hair, donned yellow robes, and with a large company of other women journeyed to Vesāli. When Ānanda saw her, he was moved and decided to intercede on her behalf with the Buddha:

And the venerable Ānanda went unto the Exalted One and saluted and sat down at one side. So seated, he spoke thus: 'Lord, Mahāpajāpatī, the Gotamid, stands outside at the door, her feet swollen and her limbs covered with dust, sad and sorrowful, sobbing and in tears, saying: "The Exalted One will not allow women to go forth..." Lord, well were it that women should be allowed to go forth from the home...into the discipline of Dhamma, declared by the tathāgata!'

'Enough, Ānanda, set not your heart upon going forth of women from the home...'⁵

Having asked three times and been refused, Ānanda then posed the question in another way:

he spoke thus: 'Lord if women go forth from the home to the homeless life into discipline of Dhamma, declared by the tathāgata, can they realize the fruit of Stream-winning, of Once-returning, of Non-returning and of Arahantship?'

'They can, Ānanda...'

'Lord, if they can...since Mahāpajāpatī has been of great service to the Exalted One — for as his aunt, nurse and foster-mother, she gave him milk, when the Exalted One's mother dies — well were it that women should be allowed to go forth...'

'If, Ānanda, Mahāpajāpatī, the Gotamid, receive these eight cardinal rules, it shall be for her the acceptance.'⁶

Mahāpajāpatī gratefully received these eight rules which the Buddha devised solely for women mendicants, and vowed never to transgress them. Having reported this to the Buddha, Ānanda then was told:

"If, Ānanda, women had not obtained the going forth from home into homelessness in the *dhamma* and discipline proclaimed by the Truth-finder, the Brahma-faring, Ānanda, would have lasted long, true *dhamma* would have endured for a thousand years. But since, Ānanda, women have gone forth...in the *dhamma* and discipline proclaimed by the Truth-finder, now Ānanda, the Brahma-faring will not last long, true *dhamma* will endure only for five hundred years.

“Even, Ānanda, as those households which have many women and few men easily fall prey to robbers, to pot-thieves, even so, Ānanda, in whatever *dhamma* and discipline women obtain the going forth from home into homelessness, that Brahma-faring will not last long.

“Even, Ānanda, as when the disease known as mildew attacks a whole field of rice that field of rice does not last long, even so, Ānanda, in whatever *dhamma* and discipline women obtain the going forth... that Brahma-faring will not last long.

“Even, Ānanda, as when the disease known as red rust attacks a whole field of sugar-cane, that field of sugar-cane does not last long, even so, Ānanda, in whatever *dhamma* and discipline...that Brahma-faring will not last long.⁷

This account has been given in detail not in order to explore the Buddha’s conflicting ideas about women entering the sangha, nor even to see the tactics Ānanda used to change the Buddha’s mind, although these both are intriguing topics. What is relevant at the moment is to present the most famous passage from early Buddhism dealing with the disappearance of the True Dharma, and to see (1) that the time period specified for the survival of the True Dharma had been 1000 years, but now it will only last 500 years, (2) and that the reason for this is the entrance of women into the sangha.⁸

2. A second set of passages argues against the inevitability of the disappearance of the True Dharma, either as the consequence of external historical forces, such as the passage of time, or social forces, such as the entry of women into the sangha. Rather, the True Dharma (Saddhamma) will disappear due to the religious and moral laxity of the disciples, and can be recovered if the disciples reform.

This laxity or internal and self-caused decay is generally manifested in five ways: lack of reverence toward (1) the teacher (Buddha), (2) the Dharma, (3) the Sangha, (4) learning, and (5) meditation. For example, in the *Samyutta-Nikāya*, ii 223-225, we read that the Buddha said to Kassapa:

‘It happens thus, Kassapa. When members decrease, and the true doctrine disappears, there are then more precepts, and few brethren are established as Arahants. There is no disappearing of the true doctrine, Kassapa, till a counterfeit doctrine arises in the world; but when a counterfeit doctrine does arise, then there is a disappearance of the true doctrine. Just as there is no disappearing of gold so long as there is no counterfeit gold arisen in the world. So it is with the true doctrine...There are five lowering things that conduce to the obscuration and disappearance of the true doctrine. Which five?

'It is when brethren and sisters, laymen and laywomen
live in irreverence and are unruly toward the Teacher,
live in irreverence and are unruly toward the Norm,
live in irreverence and are unruly toward the Order,
live in irreverence and are unruly toward the training,
live in irreverence and are unruly toward concentrative study.

'But when they live in reverence and docility toward these Five, then do these five things conduce to the maintenance, the clarity, the presence of the true doctrine.⁹

This passage is paralleled in two Chinese versions,¹⁰ with an interesting addition. In the *Tsa-a-han ching* we read that it is to be compared with the period when the Five Corruptions (*wu-cho*) appear in the world, when a kalpa is about to come to an end. This use of a cosmological concept to illustrate a time when conditions are not conducive to the survival of the True Dharma will be discussed later. What is important to note here is that there is no assertion that the kalpa was approaching an end, but only that lack of reverence for the Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, learning and practice would produce conditions *similar to* that period. Unlike the end of a kalpa, unlike the destruction of earth, water, fire, and wind, these unfavorable conditions are reversible if monks will only develop the necessary reverence.¹¹

In the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* there are three passages which are comparable to the selection from the *Samyutta-Nikāya*, except that they are in response to a question from Kimbila rather than Kassapa. In addition, they have a slightly different ending to the list of items needing reverential attention. Besides listing the Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, training and concentration, the qualities of goodwill (*paṭisanthāra*) and zeal may be added, making a list of seven,¹² or concentration may be replaced by these two,¹³ or concentration replaced merely by goodwill.¹⁴

3. A third type of condition for the disappearance of the True Dharma is found in three short selections in the *Samyutta-Nikāya*, XLII. 22, 23, 25. All of these say that the True Dharma will or will not last long depending on whether or not the four states of mindfulness (*ssu-nien-ch'u*) are cultivated and emphasized.¹⁵ The four states of mindfulness, of course, are non-attachment with regard to things pertaining to the body, to feelings, to the mind, or to states of the mind.¹⁶

4. The fourth category consists of three texts found only in the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya*, and dealing principally with the correct transmission, understanding and application of the True Dharma. For example, in *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* iv. 154 it says that the True Dharma will disappear because:

carelessly the monks hear Dhamma; carelessly they master it; carelessly they bear it in mind; carelessly they test the good of the things borne in mind; knowing the good and knowing Dhamma, carelessly they go their ways in Dhamma by Dhamma.

Verily, monks, these are the five things that lead to the confounding, the disappearance of Saddhamma.¹⁷

It should be noted that the disappearance of the True Dharma is reversible in so far as these faults are corrected. In the next section of the *nikāya* a similar list of five is given, but with a few changes. The True Dharma will disappear because the monks: (1) do not master the nine-divisions of the teachings; (2) do not fully teach others; (3) do not have others repeat it in detail; (4) do not themselves repeat it in detail; and (5) do not inwardly reflect upon it. By acting in the opposite way, however, the True Dharma will endure.

In *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* iv. 156, there is another list of five, but this consists of a mixture of failures to correctly learn and transmit the teaching as mentioned above, plus two items of moral laxity:

Again, the elders are luxurious, lax, prime-movers in backsliding, who shirk the burden of the secluded life, nor put forth effort to attain the unattained, to master the unmastered, to realize the unrealized...

Moreover, monks, the Order is broken; then there is reviling between one another, accusation between one another, quarrelling between one another, repudiation between one another; and they of no faith do not find faith there and the faithful become otherwise. This, monks, is the fifth thing that leads to the confounding, the disappearance of Saddhamma.¹⁸

5. With the fifth group of texts listed by Kumoi, we move into an entirely different range of circumstances leading to the disappearance of the True Dharma: viz., unfavorable social and political conditions external to the sangha are added to internal sources of decay. These texts are all in Chinese, and are the beginning of a theme which extends from the early texts on into Mahāyāna sūtras, finally culminating in a group of texts which entered China in the sixth century A.D.

External Threats to Buddhism

This theme of the disappearance of Buddhism because of external persecution was frequently illustrated by retelling the story of the King of Kauśāmbī. The basic sequence of events in the story is outlined by Lamotte in the following way. A coalition of foreign kings will put India to the sword and cruelly persecute the Buddhist religion: the clergy will be massacred, the monasteries demolished and the scriptures burned. However, the King of Kauśāmbī will conquer the foreign kings and will make his kingdom the last refuge of the disciples of Buddha. He will welcome to his heart numerous Buddhist monks and offer them profuse hospitality. But the stay in Kauśāmbī never was favorable for the fate of the order. Already, at the time of Śākyamuni, a schism burst open in the bosom of the community, and the Buddha himself was not able to succeed in restoring harmony. It will be the same to the end of time. Coddled by pious laymen, the monks will become addicted to laziness and will not observe the rules of their order. They will no longer count in their ranks a single Arhat (the highest representative of the Correct Doctrine in the absolute sense), or a single master of the Canon (the highest representative of the Correct Doctrine in the conventional sense). Both will be found dead at the center of a large quarrel during the celebration of the last uposatha ceremony. It is in this way that the Correct Doctrine will disappear from the world and it will be necessary to await for a new Buddha to bring it back.¹⁹

This story appears at length in the *Tsa-a-han ching*, but lacks a parallel version in the Pali *Samyutta-Nikāya*. Although this is probably the oldest version of the story, it was not translated into Chinese until 436 to 443 A.D. Lamotte, however, draws attention to five other accounts:

1. T 49.11b.12ff - a translation in verse done under the Western Chin (265-316) of the *Prediction to Kātyāyana*
2. T 49.8c.24ff - a translation in prose of a sūtra with the same title done between 420 and 479
3. T 50.126c - this part of the *Aśokāvadāna* was not translated until the end of the fifth century
4. T 13.377c ff - a translation of the *Candragarbhāsūtra* done by Narendrayaśas between 558 and 593, entitled the *Ta-chi (yüeh-tsang) ching* (see below)

5. T 27.918a.18-b.21 - a passage from the *Vibhāṣā śāstra* translated by Hsüan-tsang between 656 and 659.²⁰

The historical circumstances upon which the Kauśāmbī accounts are based apparently took place with the invasion of India by various foreign peoples during the second century B.C. Although the various kings who attack from the four directions cannot be definitely identified, they seem to be connected with the overthrow of the Maurya Dynasty and the setting up of rule by Puṣyamitra (187-151 B.C.).²¹

Another political incident which served to illustrate the dark times and which augured ill for the future of Buddhism was the action by King Ajātaśatru in usurping the throne from his father, King Bimbisāra. This incident plays a central role in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*²² and is the setting for the *Kuan Wu-liang-shou ching*,²³ two very important texts in the development of Chinese Buddhism and in the life of Tao-ch'ō (562-645), an early advocate of *mapppō*.

The *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* discusses at length whether or not the True Dharma was disappearing. It then proceeds to depict the struggle to reform Ajātaśatru and argues that in spite of his evil deeds the True Dharma was always present and capable of manifesting itself. On the other hand, the *Kuan Wu-liang-shou ching* uses the image of Queen Vaidehī to symbolize the fate of contemporary people who seem trapped in a cruel and forbidding world far distant from the Buddha. However, the actions of King Ajātaśatru were not seen as leading to the disappearance of Buddhism, but manifesting the state of the world when it was difficult to actualize or live the True Dharma.

More directly parallel to the Kauśāmbī situation was the invasion of India about 500 A.D. by the Ephtalites. In addition to the destruction which visited Buddhist sanctuaries as a consequence of the invasion, one of their kings called Mihilagula (502-542) became famous for his active persecution of Buddhism. This was reflected in the *Lien-hua-mien ching*²⁴ which describes Mihilagula as the incarnation of a devil intent on destroying the True Dharma. Yamada Ryūjō points out that this situation is also reflected in the *Ta-chi-ching*, translated into Chinese by Narendrayaśas in 566 A.D.²⁵ This latter sūtra is also important in the thought of Tao-ch'ō, whose overall mood must have been influenced by the reports of the

persecution of Buddhism in India conveyed in these texts and by refugees who probably entered China at that time.

Later Mahāyāna texts and Chinese Buddhists, in so far as they discussed the decline and disappearance of Buddhism, usually placed responsibility for its demise on the inevitable and external movement of historical forces beyond their control. Thus, they selectively focused on the first and last group of passages presented by Kumoi. Perhaps this is only natural, since those who felt that the survival of the True Dharma was contingent upon their own diligence, mindfulness, reverence and zeal were probably too busy trying to actualize this. Because they were not overcome with the inevitability of the disappearance of the Dharma they were not the ones who propagated the idea. As a consequence, the remaining three groups of passages were left out of historical theorizing and even in the beginning served only as devices for religious exhortation.

Pāli Timetables of Decline

Among those who came to believe in the inevitability of the disappearance of Buddhism, different predictions were made about when and how this was to happen. In Pali texts we can find the presence of a three-stage and a five-stage scheme. For example, in *The Questions of King Milinda* IV, i, 55-61, there is an interesting section on the duration of Buddhism involving three stages of decline, involving understanding, practice and outward form:

‘There are three modes of the disappearance, O king, of a system of doctrine. And what are the three? The decline of attainment to an intellectual grasp of it, the decline of conduct in accordance with it, and the decline of its outward form.¹, (134) When the attainment of it ceases, then even the man who conducts himself aright in it has no clear understanding of it. By the decline of conduct the promulgation of the rules of discipline ceases, only the outward form of the religion remains. When the outward form has ceased, the succession of the tradition is cut off. These are the three forms of the disappearance of a system of doctrine.’

¹Liṅga, possibly ‘uniform.’ Either the Order or the yellow robe, for instance, if the system were Buddhism...²⁶

Although the text discusses the prediction of the Buddha that the True Dharma would only remain for 500 years, no precise figures are assigned to these three stages outlined by Nāgasena to King Milinda.

A major alteration in the Pali tradition took place in the fifth century A.D. when Buddhaghosa proposed a five-stage scheme for the disappearance of Buddhism from the world in which each stage would last 1000 years. (1) Writing 900 years after the death of the Buddha, he suggested that by the time 100 more years had elapsed disciples would have become incapable of achieving the full measure of attainments. Thus, after that time disciples would be able to achieve fewer and fewer stages of an arhat. (2) The second disappearance will take place after the next 1000 years and will involve the failure to maintain proper conduct since insight, meditation and spiritual achievements will have become impossible to attain. (3) After the next 1000 years, prompted by lack of reverence by royalty and their subjects, drought, famine and other calamities will occur. As a consequence, the sangha will not be supported, novices will not be taught, and the scriptures will gradually be lost from the world. This is to happen in reverse order to their appearance in the world, so that the Abhidharma texts will vanish first, and the Vinaya and Jātaka stories will be the last to go.²⁷ (4) After 4000 years there will be the disappearance of the external signs of Buddhism such as begging-bowls and yellow robes. (5) In the last stage the final thing to disappear will be the *stupas* and relics of the Buddha himself,²⁸ as all reverence ultimately vanishes. Thus, after 5000 years Buddhism will have disappeared completely from the world.²⁹

This five-stage scheme is repeated in later Pali texts such as the *Mahāvamsa* III.38, the *Sumaṅgalavilāsini* I.25, the *Atthasālinī* p. 27, and the *Samantapāsādikā* I.30.³⁰ It also appears in such Sinhalese works as the *Sāratthasaṅgaha* by Siddhatthathera in the thirteenth century, and the *Saddhammaratnākara* of the fifteenth century.³¹ Also, in the *Anāgata-Vamsa (History of Future Events)* located in the Library of Mg. Hpo Hmyin at Rangoon, and printed in the *Journal of the Pāli Text Society* (1886) by J. Minayeff, we find this same five-stage prediction.³² In addition, George Coedès has drawn attention to the interesting activities of King Lüt'ai of Siam who "ascended the throne in 1347 and abdicated to enter religious life in 1361." In 1357 when he was still king he had an inscription made to mark the 1900th year following the death of the Buddha:

After stating that the Good Law is fated to disappear 3099 years after this foundation, he enumerates the four deadlines that mark the way leading to this fatal issue: in 99 years the disappearance of the Scriptures, 1000 years later the disappearance of the observance of the precepts, yet another 1000 years later the disappearance of the exterior signs, and, at last, another 1000 years later, the gathering together at Bodhgaya and the cremation of the corporeal relics of the Blessed One.³³

It is to be noted that the second and third stages of Buddhaghoṣa's scheme have been reversed in the scheme accepted by King Lüt'ai. Coedès remarks that the king was no longer concerned about the disappearance of the Scriptures which would soon take place, but was anxious to urge his subjects to take full advantage of the remaining opportunity to practice Buddhism and enter the path leading to *nirvāṇa*. Thus, he writes that:

Our generation at this time rejoices in great merits for it has come to the world at the time when the religion of the Buddha still exists. All must hasten to pay homage to the stupas, the chetiyas, to the Holy Tree of the Awakening, which is the same thing as paying homage to our Master in person. Whoever utters a vow being full of faith in this equivalence, even if he utters only once the vow that he may be reborn in heaven until Śrī Ārya Maitreya descends from it to be the Buddha, and then that he may be reborn on this earth, will certainly have his vow granted.³⁴

Whereas Tao-ch'o and the Pure Land tradition in East Asia recommended appealing to Amitābha and vowing to be reborn in his Pure Land as the only adequate measure to be taken during the decline of Buddhism, King Lüt'ai urges that his subjects appeal to Maitreya and seek rebirth in Tuṣita heaven.

A fascinating account of contemporary beliefs in rural Ceylon about the disappearance of Buddhism is given by Richard Gombrich. Based on his field research he found that 5000 years was the usual figure given for the duration of the Buddha's teaching.³⁵ But rather than conforming strictly to the 5000 year timetable we have outlined above, various Buddhists he interviewed were of differing opinions about whether it is still possible to reach *nirvāṇa* or become an *arhat*, although the "average view, perhaps, was that of the monk who said that it is not impossible to attain *nirvāṇa* now, but 'religious practice is weak; it is hard to believe that there is anyone alive who has become an *arhat*'..." Nevertheless, Gombrich did find a monk who "knew the Canon unusually well" who said that it was a "grave mistake to state that no *arhats* now exist." Then in ap-

parent reference to the third kind of passage outlined by Kumoi above, he said that the Buddha “once told a brahmin that his teaching (*sāsana*) would last so long as monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen practiced mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*), and of these four groups only the nuns have disappeared.”³⁶ However, most seemed to conform to the assertions of the *Āṅguttara-Aṭṭhakathā* (*Manorathapūraṇī*) I, 87-93, by saying that after 5000 years five things will disappear: relics, realization, monks and novices (*liṅga*), practice and religious learning.³⁷

Timetables of Decline in Chinese Translations

Among the Buddhist texts which were translated into Chinese, predictions of the demise of Buddhism and calculations about the process and schedule of decline were numerous and diverse. Accordingly, by the end of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century, Chinese Buddhists not only were trying to cope with the sobering realization that Buddhism was declining, as can be seen in the writings of Hui-ssu (515-577), Hsin-hsing (540-594), and Tao-ch’o (562-645), but they also were struggling with the more academic question of which version of the process of decline was to be followed and how were the dates to be calculated. Fascinating discussions of the various alternatives appear in the writings of such thinkers as Fei Ch’ang-fang in 597 A.D.,³⁸ Chi-tsang (549-623),³⁹ Tao-shih in 688 A.D.,⁴⁰ and the Korean monk Wonch’uk (613-696).⁴¹ As early as Ching-ying Hui-yüan (523-592) we can find the suggestion that the disappearance of Buddhism was not dated the same by everybody, even though he repeats the three-stage theory which became generally accepted.⁴²

The three-stage theory of the disappearance of Buddhism (*san-shih*, “three periods”) which came to be accepted throughout China and Japan was a late development. As we have seen, the earliest texts which are cited by Kumoi do not contain this idea, but are focused primarily on the problem of the disappearance of the True Dharma. Nevertheless, there also appears to have been the early development of the idea of a “counterfeit doctrine” (*hsiang-fa*, Skt. *pratirūpaka*) which replaces the True Dharma (*saddharma*).⁴³ This reappears in the earliest Mahāyāna texts. For example, in Chapter Three of the *Lotus Sūtra*⁴⁴ and in the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*

there is a discussion about a counterfeit of the perfection of wisdom (*hsiang-szu po-jo po-lo-mi*) which will arise in the future, although the term does not correspond exactly to the phrase for counterfeit dharma (*hsiang-fa*).⁴⁵

As a consequence, a period of "Counterfeit Dharma" began to be acknowledged and formalized as a definite stage of development. Because it began to be accepted as a more or less inevitable event, the term also became less and less accusative (as suggested by the word "counterfeit"). People were left with little alternative other than "imitating" the behavior and expressions of those who previously had fully realized the True Dharma. Since I will now deal with the tradition as it arrived in China, the best translation for *hsiang-fa* is the period of "Imitation Dharma."

As might be expected, discussion arose over when this "Imitation Dharma" actually would become pervasive, and how long it would last. In 1927 in his monumental study of the Three Stages Sect, Yabuki Keiki outlined the four basic alternatives which developed:

1. True Dharma - 500 years; Imitation Dharma - 1000 years
2. True Dharma - 1000 years; Imitation Dharma - 500 years
3. True Dharma - 500 years; Imitation Dharma - 500 years
4. True Dharma - 1000 years; Imitation Dharma - 1000 years.⁴⁶

Although this is not comprehensive, it is perhaps the most convenient of many attempts (which go back as far as Chi-tsang)⁴⁷ to systemize the alternatives which appeared in the Indian scriptures. Accordingly, we shall use it as the basic framework for examining the concept as it appeared in Chinese translations of these texts.

1. The sequence of 500 and 1000 years for the True and the Imitation Dharmas respectively is found in the *Mo-ho mo-yeh ching*⁴⁸ translated between 479 and 502 A.D. by T'an-ching, and in the *Ta-chi yüeh-tsang ching*⁴⁹ translated in 566 A.D. by Narendrayaśas. This became by far the most popular estimation in China.

2. The formulation of 1000 and 500 years, just the reverse of the above, is found in the *Pei-hua ching*⁵⁰ translated between 414 and 426 A.D.⁵¹

3. The 500 and 500 year sequence is found in the *Ta-ch'eng san-chü ch'an-hui ching*⁵² at the end of the sixth century, and in the *Hsien-*

*ch'ieh ching*⁵³ translated by Dharmarakṣa in either 291 or 300 A.D.⁵⁴ It is uncertain whether or not the Perfection of Wisdom and Mādhyamika tradition advocated this position. In the *Ta-chih-tu-lun* we read that after 500 years of the True Dharma there is the period of Imitation Dharma.⁵⁵ The *Diamond Sūtra* uses the phrase “during the last 500 years after the death of the Buddha,”⁵⁶ without specifying when those last 500 years are to take place. However, Ching-mu in his commentary on the *Chung-lun* by Nāgārjuna identifies these last 500 years as being the period of the Imitation Dharma when he writes that “in the period of the Imitation Dharma during the last 500 years after the death of the Buddha...”⁵⁷ Since all of these works were translated by Kumārajīva who is identified with this tradition, we might suggest that at least it is his understanding that the True Dharma was to last 500 years, followed by 500 years for the Imitation Dharma.

4. As for the suggestion of 1000 and 1000 years, Huai-kan writing at the end of the seventh century attributes the theory to the *Ta-pei ching* although it is not to be found in the present version of that text.⁵⁸ Similarly, Chi-tsang reports that the *Ch'i-yüan-ching-she lu* sets forth this idea, but it also cannot be confirmed.⁵⁹

An Abhidharma work also argued that the True Dharma would survive for 1000 years—undoubtedly in order to include their ideas under the period of truth. The basis for their contention is that the True Dharma would shorten to only a 500 year period if women entered the sangha and did *not* follow the Eight Rules. However, since they did accept and practice these rules, then the True Dharma was protected and was to last for 1000 years.⁶⁰ This tradition (which inadvertently restores women from their role of villains) was quite widespread. Besides citing a comparable passage in the *Abhidharmakośa*,⁶¹ Lamotte lists five other texts in which the Buddha's true teaching is said to endure for 1000 years.⁶² This scheme became widely accepted in Japan since it was felt that the Kamakura period had experienced the end of even the Imitation Dharma.

Approaching the End of Buddhism

What happens after the disappearance of the True Dharma and the Imitation Dharma? Some texts just develop more stages, such

as the *Ta-chi ching* which offers five stages of 500 years each,⁶³ which is quoted by Tao-ch'o,⁶⁴ and which is expanded by Chi-tsang into six periods of 500 years each.⁶⁵ The Chinese version of the *Saman-tapāsādikā* describes the increasing difficulty of actualizing the Buddha's teaching over five periods of 1000 years each, followed by 5000 more years in which his teachings can be known but not practiced. However, eventually an end to this decline is foreseen, and the text finally acknowledges that after 10,000 years even the words of the scriptures will have completely vanished.⁶⁶

Many texts, while not offering a schedule of decline, have a foreboding of the end. As we have seen, the *Diamond Sūtra* speaks of the "last 500 years," at which time it will be very difficult for people to believe in or understand its teachings.⁶⁷ Similarly, the *Lotus Sūtra* praises and predicts great benefits for anyone who "keeps, reads, and recites the *Lotus Sūtra* in the last five hundred years after the death of the *Tathāgata*."⁶⁸ Especially in the *An-lo hsing* Chapter we find directions about the kind of behavior which is appropriate in those last days.⁶⁹ The *Wu-liang-shou ching* ("Larger Pure Land Sūtra") also has a sense of future peril. "When I am gone," says the Buddha, "the Way of the scriptures will gradually be lost, and people will again lose themselves in flattery and deception and fall again into evil ways."⁷⁰ Accordingly, "in the future when the Way of the scriptures has vanished, because of my compassion and pity I shall preserve this (Pure Land) sūtra for a hundred years."⁷¹

The *Lotus Sūtra*, emphasizing its exclusiveness rather than its accessibility, says that "It is not difficult to stand in the Highest Heaven and expound innumerable other sūtras to all living beings, but it is difficult to expound this sūtra in the evil world after my extinction."⁷² Supporting this image is the statement that the *Lotus Sūtra* was the last of the teachings revealed by the Buddha because it is the most excellent and people would not have believed it or would even have hated it.⁷³

These themes are echoed in many later sūtras. For example, in the *Pao-hsing t'o-lo-ni ching* we read: "At the time when the last dharma is about to be extinguished, there will be many fearful and dreadful things. Hold onto the merits of this sūtra (because) the various Buddhas will not be able to preach."⁷⁴ On the other hand,

the *Ta-fang kuang-shih-lun ching* urges the various classes of disciples to build temples and pagodas to increase their merit so that “in the period of the decline of the Dharma (*mo-fa*, Jp. *mappō*), when the Dharma is about to disappear they will be very able to protect themselves and others, and in future times will always protect the Buddha’s teaching...”⁷⁵ Or the *Ta-sa-che-ni-kan-tzu suo-shuo ching* asserts that:

“this wonderful law is difficult to believe, difficult to practice, difficult to measure... Mañjuśrī, in the latter days after (my extinction) when the teachings are about to be destroyed, having heard this Teaching if there are those who awaken faith, those examine it, those who come to understand it, Mañjuśrī, you should know that these people have already made offerings to various past Buddhas who are immeasurable and unlimited, and performed the various practices well, and believed in and understood this Mahāyāna teaching.”⁷⁶

Dating According to Stages of Decline

Since it became commonplace in Buddhist texts to invoke the idea of an end-period for Buddhism, it is not surprising that among Buddhist writers in China the same image began to be used. For example, we have seen above how Kumārajīva probably believed that the True Dharma and Imitation Dharma would last 500 years each. Complementing this is a passage in his correspondence with Hui-yüan at the beginning of the fifth century where he quotes an unidentified scripture to say that “in the last period” (*mo-hou*) there will be in the East a bodhisattva who will protect the Buddhist doctrine, and urges Hui-yüan to continue to exert himself.⁷⁷ Kumārajīva was responding to a letter from Hui-yüan in which he refers to contemporary events happening “in this latter age” (*ch’i-mo*).⁷⁸ Whether Kumārajīva was subtly suggesting that Hui-yüan was that “bodhisattva in the East” or not, it is clear that both Kumārajīva and Hui-yüan considered themselves in a period far removed from the time of the Buddha and consequently filled with particular obstacles and difficulties.

As further evidence of this, we find the disciples of Kumārajīva such as T’an-ching describing the time of Nāgārjuna as a period of the Imitation Teaching (*hsiang-chiao*) in the final period (*mo-yeh*) when conflicts arise because men’s capacities are too low to discern the truth.⁷⁹ Another disciple, Seng-jui (355-439), writes in his Preface to the translation of the *Ta-chih-tu-lun* that “Aśvaghōṣa was

born at the end of the Period of the True Dharma, and Nāgārjuna was born at the end of the period of the Imitation Dharma.”⁸⁰ Seng-jui quotes an unidentified *Indian Chronicle* (*T’ien-chu chuan*) as his source.⁸¹ This seems to be at variance with a scriptural source, the *Mo-ho mo-yeh ching*, which was translated at the end of the fifth century and which says that Āśvaghōṣa appeared 600 years after the death of the Buddha, and Nāgārjuna appeared 100 years later.⁸² In any event, if Seng-jui believed that Nāgārjuna was born at the end of the period of Imitation Dharma, it would imply that his own times were beyond that and buried in the last days. Nevertheless, these “last days” are not named nor is there a sense of them being accepted as a definite and circumscribed period.

It is interesting to note that the chronology of the gradual disappearance of Buddhism became one method by which Buddhist writers divided up and dated previous events. This implies a rather wide acceptance of the idea if it could be used as a reference for chronological calculation. For example, T’an-luan (ca. 488-554) locates Vasubandhu in the time of the Imitation Dharma,⁸³ and Tao-shih (668) followed the outline given by the *Mo-ho mo-yeh ching*.⁸⁴ In reference to Nāgārjuna it is worth noting the way the Tibetan historian Tāranātha (writing as late as 1608 A.D.) also located Nāgārjuna in terms of the decline of Buddhism:

As it was predicted, the first five hundred years constituted the period of the flourish of the Law of the Teacher and the next five hundred years the period of its decay.

Accordingly, the period preceding Nāgārjuna’s leadership of the Law in the *madhya-deśa* was the period of flourish according to the prophecy, because it was the period of the increasing activity like building temples, etc.

The period of Nāgārjuna’s work for the welfare of the living beings in the south was the period of the beginning of the *mleccha* religion. It is clear that when he was residing at *Śrī Parvata these damages were done by the *brāhmaṇa* king *Puṣyamitra. So this appears to be the beginning of the decline (of the Doctrine).⁸⁵

Among the chronological theories that Fei Ch’ang-fang considers in 597 A.D. is one from the fifth century which might advocate the imminency of the disappearance of the Dharma (*mō-fa*, Jp. *mapppō*). In reporting on the theory of Fa-hsien (d. 423) based on his biography, Fei Ch’ang-fang writes that he proposed that the Buddha died in 1084 B.C., 1681 years from the time in which Fei Ch’ang-fang was writing.⁸⁶ Based on these figures and on the

assumption that *mo-fa* begins 1501 years after the death of the Buddha, we find that *mo-fa* should have begun in 417 A.D. However, he lived at the time of Kumārajīva, and as we have seen there was no clearly formulated concept of a definitely defined period called *mo-fa* at that time. Takao Giken also finds the actual use of the word *mo-fa* in the writings of Tao-sheng in the period of 483-493, but for the same reason rejects it as implying a scheme of three periods.⁸⁷

The “*Nirvāṇa Sūtra*”

A last item of the fifth century which should not go unnoticed is the presence of the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* in north China following its translation by T’an-wu-ch’an in 421 A.D. There is frequent discussion in this text either predicting the future end of Buddhism, or describing actions to be taken during that last period. For example, at one point we read that “there remain only about 80 years before the destruction of the True Dharma.”⁸⁸ “Know that it will not be long before the teaching of the Buddha disappears,”⁸⁹ etc.

Estimates of the date of compilation of the *sūtra* place it in the early 4th century.⁹⁰ This corresponds to the severely anti-Buddhist rule of the Gupta Dynasty (320-500 A.D.). Moreover, based on the legends transmitted in the northern tradition in which the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* participated, the death of the Buddha was set at approximately 383 B.C.⁹¹ Thus, when the *sūtra* reports the Buddha saying to Kaśyāpa that “700 years after my death, the devil Māra Pāpīyas will gradually destroy my True Dharma,”⁹² it indicates that the demise of Buddhism is to be in process in 317 A.D. Undoubtedly this comment refers to the time of the compilation of the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*, and corresponds almost exactly with the advent of the Gupta era.⁹³

Although written at a time filled with a sense of crisis about the future of Buddhism, the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* does not build thicker walls of defense but offers a new message of hope. All living beings have Buddha-nature (*buddhatā*) within them, and even icchantikas can be saved.⁹⁴ The *Tathāgata* is eternal in spite of outward appearances of death. This is illustrated by the Two Truths, in which the Conventional Truth can die out, but the Ultimate Truth lives on.⁹⁵ This was good news for Buddhists living during the unstable times of north China which suffered through various foreign invasions and

two persecutions of Buddhism (446 and 574 A.D.) during the fifth and sixth centuries. Thus, being a message born out of a crucible of hardship in India, the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* was well tempered to provide a complex but confident vision to the Buddhists of China.

But in spite of the sense of crisis which the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* conveys, and with which it attempts to deal, it has no clearly defined doctrine of the impending demise of Buddhism. On the contrary, after the True Dharma disappears and there is the Imitation Dharma,⁹⁶ the Three Jewels only appear to die.⁹⁷ In retelling the Kauśāmbī story, the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* depicts the death of the Arhat who teaches the True Dharma, and the harm which is suffered by 600 monks. But in response to the lament by the common people that the teaching of the Buddha is destroyed, it reports the Buddha saying: “My True Dharma really was not destroyed! At that time their country had 120,000 various bodhisattvas who righteously upheld my teaching.” Later, Kāśyapa explains to the multitude that they should not be anxious or filled with remorse. “Earthly existence is not empty. The *Tathāgata* always exists without changing, and the Dharma and Sangha as well.”⁹⁸

Period of the Five Corruptions

The introduction to the *Wu-liang-shou ching* briefly recounts the life of Śākyamuni as background to set the stage for his exposition on Amitābha and his Pure Land. When describing Śākyamuni’s quest for enlightenment during his six years of austerities, it says that he appeared in the world of the “five corruptions,” living as others lived in the midst of dust and impurities.⁹⁹ Also, the last section of the *Amitābha Sūtra* asserts that Śākyamuni achieved the highest enlightenment even though living an earthly life in the midst of the “five corruptions.” A cryptic list of these Five Corruptions is then given, followed by another proclamation of the fact that for the sake of sentient beings Śākyamuni achieved the difficult task of attaining supreme enlightenment in this period of the Five Corruptions.¹⁰⁰ Thus, this concept of the Five Corruptions is found attached to the Pure Land tradition inherited in China through the classic texts.

The “five corruptions” listed in the *Amitābha Sūtra* are usually explained in the following way:

1. *chieh-cho* - a corruption of the times (Skt. *kalpa-kaṣāya*), when wars, natural disasters, famines and pestilence occur
2. *chien-cho* - a corruption of outlook (Skt. *dṛṣṭi-kaṣāya*), when confused and deluded ideas fill the air
3. *fan-nao-cho* - corruption due to inner defilements (Skt. *kleśa-kaṣāya*) when one experiences greed, ignorance and hatred
4. *chung-sheng-cho* - a corruption of living beings (Skt. *sattva-kaṣāya*) when the body is wracked with miseries, the mind is weak, and one is plagued with infirmities
5. *ming-cho* - a corruption of longevity (Skt. *āyus-kaṣāya*) when the life span decreases to ten years.¹⁰¹

According to the *Abhidharma-kośa*, the Five Corruptions (Skt. *pañca-kaṣāya*) occur in the period when a world system is decreasing. In Buddhist cosmology, large time periods are measured in “kalpas.” A great kalpa (*ta-chieh*) is divided into four incalculable kalpas (*a-seng-ch'i-yeh chieh*): (1) a kalpa for the creation of the universe, (2) a kalpa of existence, (3) a kalpa of decay, and (4) a kalpa of non-existence. Each of these kalpas is subdivided into twenty small kalpas (*hsiao-chieh*). Finally, each small kalpa is divided into a period of increase (*tseng*) and decrease (*mieh*). It is during this period of decrease when human life is shortening from a life span of 84,000 years to 100 years that the Buddhas appear, because life could be seen in its true condition of unsatisfactoriness. However, when life continued to diminish from 100 years to 10 years in length, Buddhas do not appear because of the Five Corruptions.¹⁰²

In direct contradiction to the Abhidharmist view, Mahāyāna texts teach that Buddhas *are* born in the period of the Five Corruptions. For example, according to the Pure Land tradition it is precisely in such impossible times that Śākyamuni was born and the Pure Land sūtras were delivered. Similarly, in the *Lotus Sūtra* we read that Buddhas are born into an evil world in the midst of the Five Corruptions. After listing these in slightly different order from the *Amitābha Sūtra*, the *Lotus Sūtra* goes on to say that during the chaotic time of a kalpa experiencing these corruptions (when hatred, greed and illusion cause bad roots to develop), Buddhas use the power of their expedient means to divide the One Vehicle into

Three.¹⁰³ Thus, the *Lotus Sūtra* also uses this concept of the Five Corruptions to accentuate the incapacities of living beings during the time of the Buddha. However, after explaining the development of the expedient means appropriate to the times, it goes on to give the real truth of the One Vehicle. By contrast, the Pure Land texts use the image of the Five Corruptions to perpetuate the expedient teaching of taking refuge in Amitābha's Pure Land, which is still appropriate for us since we are still in the period of the Five Corruptions.

Many other references could be given. For example, the phrase *wu-cho* is scattered throughout the *Pei-hua ching* in reference to the type of world into which the Buddha was born and attained enlightenment.¹⁰⁴ The growth of the concept as an important Buddhist image is finally reflected in a text devoted solely to this theme: viz., the *Ta-wu-cho ching*. Unfortunately however, this text no longer survives, even though it certainly existed in sixth century China.¹⁰⁵

This description of our own times as being stained by the Five Corruptions became a stock item in the Pure Land tradition of East Asia. It was inserted into a gatha composed as a Preface for the Chinese translation of the *Kuan Wu-liang-shou ching*.¹⁰⁶ T'an-luan (ca. 488-554) appealed to the idea in his *Wang-sheng lun-chu* to explain the desperateness of man's present condition.¹⁰⁷ Tao-ch'o (562-645) quotes this statement by T'an-luan that "in the age of the Five Corruptions at the time when there is no Buddha, it will be difficult to seek the State of Non-retrogression."¹⁰⁸ Tao-ch'o also quotes the *Ta-chi-yüeh-tsang ching* to say that the present age is the period of the Five Corruptions.¹⁰⁹ Although Chi-tsang (549-623) is not usually associated with Pure Land devotionism, he writes that because of the Five Corruptions it is not possible to meditate adequately in this defiled world. Accordingly, he quotes the *Wu-liang-shou ching* to the effect that one should abhor this world with its Five Pains and vow to be reborn in the Pure Land of Amitābha.¹¹⁰ Shantao (613-681) echoes T'an-luan in his preference for the Five Corruptions theory as a description of our plight.¹¹¹ Of course, by that time the two ideas may have fused together and been used interchangeably.

As it became defined, a period of *mo-fa* is a period following the death of a Buddha when his teaching is disappearing from the world. According to the Abhidharma tradition, Buddhas appear sequentially during the time of decrease in a small kalpa when man's life span is between 84,000 and 100 years. *Mo-fa* could exist only after the death of these Buddhas. Since no Buddhas are born during the period of the Five Corruptions when man's life is going below 100 years in length,¹¹² *mo-fa* could not exist at the same time. The one exception might be in the case of the last Buddha of a small kalpa whose Dharma might still be in the process of disappearing when the period of the Five Corruptions began. In any event, the Mahāyānists had no difficulty in suggesting that the two periods of decline, the *wu-cho* and *mo-fa*, the cosmological and the historical, could exist simultaneously, since for them Buddhas could be born into a period of the Five Corruptions, (*wu-cho*). It seems, however, that it was not until Buddhism reached China that this association became explicitly expressed.

A century earlier than Shan-tao, the T'ien-t'ai patriarch Hui-ssu (515-577) had used both ideas to describe his present situation.¹¹³ Tao-ch'o also believed this to be true, and quotes the *Ta-chi-yüeh-tsang ching* as proof. Even though both ideas are scattered throughout that sūtra,¹¹⁴ they are not directly identified together. Nevertheless, since Śākyamuni was born in the period of the Five Corruptions, and since that period was to last until the end of the present kalpa, it was inevitable that when the true Dharma gradually disappeared then the world would suffer under both handicaps.

Hui-ssu (515-577) and the Arrival of the Last Period

As the vivid influence of the historical Buddha was gradually clouded and replaced by the growth of entangled and conflicting practices, doctrines and institutions, a sense of the inevitable dissolution of true Buddhism gained ground. Although the approach of this dreaded event was softened by the awareness that everything that arises also passes away, like any terminal illness it was not until it was given a name that it could be accepted and adequately discussed. This did not happen until the sixth century when

the idea of “the final period” or the “last days” found expression in the word *mo-fa* (Jp. *mappō*) the period of the “End of the Dharma” or the “Decadent Dharma.”

As a consequence, anxiety over the fate of contemporary Buddhism could be explained by classifying all of Buddhist history into a scheme of three distinct periods. There is (1) a time of the True Dharma (*cheng-fa*) which dissolves into (2) a period of Imitation Dharma (*hsiang-fa*), which then enters (3) a period marking the End of the Dharma (*mo-fa*). The light of Buddhism is destined to dim...and go out.¹¹⁵

The first explicit appearance in China of the idea of the three periods is in the *Li-shih-yüan-wen* of Nan-yüeh Hui-ssu (515-577) where he states: “The True Dharma (*cheng-fa*) endures for a full 500 years, from 1066 through 567 B.C., the Imitation Dharma (*hsiang-fa*) lasts for a full 1000 years, from 566 B.C. to 433 A.D., and the End of the Dharma (*mo-fa*) stretches for a full 10,000 years, from 434 up until 10,433 A.D.”¹¹⁶ Not only is this the first explicit reference in China to the concept of the “three periods” (*san-shih*), but it is the first time that anyone had announced that the age of *mo-fa* was actually at hand. Hui-ssu could not be more precise than when he announces that: “Accordingly, I, Hui-ssu, was born on the eleventh day of the eleventh month of 515 A.D., the eighty-second year of *mo-fa*...”¹¹⁷

The source which Hui-ssu used as a basis for outlining the three periods is uncertain. A paragraph earlier, at the very beginning of the *Li-shih-yüan-wen*, he quotes a work no longer extant, the *Shih-chia-mou-ni-fo pei men san-mei kuan chung-sheng p'in pen-ch'i ching*.¹¹⁸ Since he uses this text to support the dates he assigns to the conception, birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha, he could also be relying on it for his statement about the three periods. On the other hand, the chronological method that he uses to detail the events that have occurred in the present *mo-fa* period is strikingly similar to the *Mo-ho mo-yeh ching* which lists events during the 500 years of the True Dharma and the 1000 years of the Imitation Dharma.¹¹⁹ Even though this text was accessible to Hui-ssu, having been translated by T'an-ching between 479 and 502 A.D., it does not mention the *mo-fa* period.

Narendrayaśas and the "Three Periods" Concept

At about the same time that Hui-ssu was writing, a Buddhist came from India with texts which carried important statements about the decline of Buddhism. We read in the *Hsü Kao-seng-chuan*¹²⁰ that a forty-year old monk called Narendrayaśas (*Na-lien-ti-yeh-she*) arrived in the Northern Ch'i capital of Yeh in 556 A.D. He was greeted by Emperor Wen-hsüan who invited him to stay in the T'ien-p'ing Monastery in the capital, which was a key center for Buddhist scholarship at the time. He immediately set to work translating Buddhist texts with the help of over 20 assistants, including Ta-t'ung Fa-shang. Later, after the persecution of the Northern Chou, he was supported by the Sui Dynasty and appointed to the Ta-hsing-shan Monastery in Ch'ang-an with more than 30 assistants including such eminent monks as T'an-yen (516-588) and Ling-tsang (519-586). He died in 589 A.D.

Among the various texts translated by Narendrayaśas, the most important work for our purposes is the *Ta-chi yüeh-tsang ching* translated into ten fascicles in 566 A.D.¹²¹ Twenty years later, in 586, Seng-chiu incorporated this text with a number of others to form the *Ta-fang-teng ta-chi ching* in sixty fascicles,¹²² which became a standard source for those seeking information on the period of *mo-fa*. In particular, the last section of the *Yüeh-tsang ching* deals with the theme of the "Complete Disappearance of the Dharma." Here we find a statement describing the duration of the True Dharma (*cheng-fa*) for 500 years when illusions can be extinguished and the *pāramitās* perfected. This is followed by a period of Imitation Dharma (*hsiang-fa*) lasting 1000 years during which the precepts will be kept and devotion given to the Buddha.¹²³ However, in this section there is no statement of a distinct third period of *mo-fa*, even though in many previous passages there had been projections about the complete disappearance of the Dharma.¹²⁴

Nevertheless, the text more than makes up for this deficiency with the vivid descriptions it gives of the circumstances surrounding the decline and destruction of the True Dharma. While on the one hand we find examples of moral laxity in which people enter the sangha for worldly benefits, then pursue non-Buddhist ideas, and criticize those who teach the correct doctrine,¹²⁵ on the other hand

there are accounts of various political and social ills which include the activities of evil kings and the situation at Kauśāmbī.¹²⁶ Side by side with these forecasts of doom are statements apparently meant to be encouraging which support the idea that the True Dharma will long endure, at least up until the time of its disappearance!¹²⁷

Yet in spite of these passages, there is not a clearly developed notion of the three periods. Indeed, in an earlier section there is a scheme of five periods, each 500 years in duration, which mark the decline and disappearance of Buddhism.¹²⁸ Nor is there a definite conception of *mo-fa* as a period limited to a specific time-frame in the texts translated by Narendrayaśas. However, the idea of *mo-fa* does appear in his very earliest text, the *Yüeh-teng san-mei ching*. There we find frequent references to “the last period in this evil world” and to “a time when the correct precepts and True Dharma are suffering destruction.”¹²⁹ This theme, which Narendrayaśas carried with him due to the political woes which he must have suffered in north India during his youth, is repeated once again in one of the last texts which he translated, the *Lien-hua-mien ching*.¹³⁰ The overall effect of this message of impending doom left an indelible mark on Chinese Buddhists at the end of the sixth century, and seemed to be quickly corroborated by the persecution of the Northern Chou. Thus, owing to the frequent references to a “last period” in the texts translated by Narendrayaśas, we must conclude that he played a large role in communicating a definite and vivid image of the presence of the end of Buddhism. However, the popularization of a formal scheme of “three periods” may well have been the contribution of someone else.

The first example of the “three periods” doctrine which actually appears in surviving translations of Indian Buddhist texts is found in the *Ta-ch’eng t’ung-hsing ching* translated by Jñānayaśas in 570 A.D.¹³¹ Here we read that “the *Tathāgata* becomes manifest from Tuṣita heaven in order to support all the True Dharma, all the Imitation Dharma, and all of the Decadent Dharma (*mo-fa*).”¹³² This passage was certainly known by Tao-ch’o, since he summarizes the context of this sentence although he does not actually quote the statement on the three periods.¹³³ It also became a reference used by later writers for we find it quoted by Liang-pen (717-777).¹³⁴ However, the passage was translated after the use of the three

period scheme by Hui-ssu. Therefore we must conclude that either the idea had appeared in earlier texts which no longer survive, or it was first transmitted orally to people such as Hui-ssu and only later appeared in written texts.

The Response of Chinese Buddhists

As reports from India of danger to the sangha were complemented in the Chinese experience by hard times and corruption, and as verbal rumor of the end of Buddhism was confirmed by actual textual authority, people who were experiencing crisis and confusion in their efforts to practice Buddhism became more firmly convinced that the age of *mo-fa* actually had arrived. No case is more pronounced than that of Hsin-hsing (540-594) who became the founder of the Three Stages Sect (*San-chieh tsung*) based on the idea of the three periods of Buddhism. However, Nogami has argued that a subtle change took place in his sense of *mo-fa*. Unlike Hui-ssu, who cataloged the signs of *mo-fa* in terms of *external* difficulties such as evil in society, laxity among monks, persecution, etc., Hsin-hsing points to a fundamental decay in the *inner* capacities of people which cripples them from recognizing the truth and obstructs their understanding of it.¹³⁵

In the monumental study of the Three Stages Sect written by Yabuki Keiki in 1927, he finds that the surviving documents do not clearly indicate whether Hsin-hsing believed that *mo-fa* appeared 1000 years or 1500 years after the death of the Buddha.¹³⁶ Thus, we do not know precisely the length of time that Hsin-hsing assigned to each of the three periods. However, there is no doubt that he believed himself to be living in the final stage of Buddhism, and that this led him to reject the traditional structures of Buddhism and to adopt an all-inclusive, totalistic and egalitarian approach more appropriate to his times.¹³⁷

In a similar way, Tao-ch'ö (562-645) despaired of fulfilling the traditional goals of Buddhism. Appealing to the *Ta-chi-yüeh-tsang ching* to the effect that the present age was the period of *mo-fa* and of the Five Corruptions (*wu-cho*) and that no one could succeed in attaining enlightenment, he argued that the only hope was to seek rebirth in the Pure Land.¹³⁸ Thus, much like Kamakura Buddhism in Japan, many Chinese Buddhists of the late sixth and seventh

centuries felt themselves to be in the last period of Buddhism and were compelled to seek new and more effective forms of practice. Also, like Kamakura, these new developments resulted in the formation of new schools: the Three Stages Sect in the case of Hsin-hsing, and the Pure Land School in the case of Tao-ch'o. This is not the place to critically examine Chinese Buddhist response to the idea of *mo-fa*, or to make a detailed comparison with Japan. Suffice it is to say that the leaders who arose in both China and Japan did meet the challenge and recreated Buddhism in satisfying and enduring ways.¹³⁹

Conclusion

As we can see from the above discussion, the idea that Buddhism would suffer hard times and eventually disappear was nascent in the earliest texts. However, the reasons given for its expected decline changed dramatically. In the early texts the major emphasis was on the internal laxity of the sangha. This might be expected in the first stages of any movement whose survival must be based on strong personal commitment since there had not yet developed a strong institutional base or the momentum of a long tradition to carry it along. The concern expressed over the admission of women to the sangha can be interpreted from the inside as a threat to discipline and harmony, and can be seen by an outside observer as possibly adding stress to a fledgling institution. At least this is one way of trying to explain the fear that the admission of women to the sangha would somehow divert the energy needed to ensure the survival of the sangha.

Sometime later (we may presume after the firm establishment of the sangha), we find an entirely different perspective since the major threat was seen as coming from the outside usually in the form of political persecution. It seems clear that this danger was quite real at times, and is documented in Indian history and Buddhist scriptures, as well as in the Chinese experience. Because of the recurrence of these problems there seems to have been a general consensus by the early sixth century that circumstances for the practice of Buddhism were more difficult than at the time of the Buddha, and there was a general anticipation that at some time Buddhism would enter a final period of decline ("the last days")

and disappear. This was expressly formulated in a number of ways, but the concept of the Five Corruptions (*wo-cho*) and the idea of the Counterfeit or Imitation Dharma (*hsiang-fa*) seem most widespread, until the occurrence of doomsday images and *mo-fa* fears late in the sixth century. At this point, the concept of the decline and eventual disappearance of Buddhism finally became an established part of Buddhist tradition. While this foreboding was prophetic in the case of modern Buddhism in India, mainland China and Tibet, the important role this idea played was not in foreshadowing decline but in launching the tradition into creative new forms of development in medieval China and Japan. The stage is now set to ask how and why this could occur.

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¹ Ch. *mo-fa*, Skt. *saddharma-vipralopa*. For its role in Kamakura Buddhism, see Kazue Kyōichi, *Nihon no Mappō shisō* (Tokyo: 1961) and Robert Lee, "Salvation in Mappō According to Nichiren" (unpublished article).

² *Samyutta-Nikāya*, 11.25, and *Divyāvadāna*, p. 268 and 272 according to É. Lamotte, "Prophéties relatives à la disparition de la Bonne Loi," *France-Asie* XVI (1959), p. 657.

³ *Ibid.*, which refers to *Divya*. p. 27, 100, 486.

⁴ Kumoi Shōzen, "Hōmetsu shisō no genryū," in Ōchō Enchi, ed., *Hokubi Bukkyō no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Heirakuji shoten, 1970), p. 289.

⁵ *Āṅguttara-Nikāya*, (iv 274), *The Book of Gradual Sayings*, Vol. IV, translated by E. M. Hare (London: Luzac and Company, 1935: 1965) p. 182.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

⁷ This is the translation by I. B. Horner of *Cullavagga* X.1, *The Book of the Discipline* (*Vinaya-pitaka*), Vol. 5, as *Sacred Books of the Buddhist*, Vol. XX (London: Luzac & Co., 1952), p. 356. Cf. the Chinese version in *Taishō shinshū Daizōkyō* (hereafter abbreviated as "T", and cited by vol., page, column, and lines) 1.607b. 1-8 and 857c.28-858a.1, and *Āṅguttara-Nikāya* iv. 278, both of which parallel this passage.

⁸ E. J. Thomas writes that the "most thorough treatment of the whole question of the nuns is by Miss M. E. Lulius van Goor, who rejects the legend entirely," (E. J. Thomas, *The Life of Buddha as Legend and History*, Third Edition (London, 1949), p. 110). Anna Seidel notes in a letter to the author that van Goor's book is *De Buddhistische Non* (Leiden, 1915), and adds that everything in the "life" of Buddha can be questioned, but implies that the literature still retains its legitimacy as a document of the early sangha.

⁹ *The Book of Kindred Sayings*, Vol. II, tr. by F. L. Woodward (London: Luzac & Co., 1952), p. 152.

¹⁰ T 2.226b-c and 419b-c.

¹¹ T 2.226c.2ff.

¹² *Anguttara Nikāya* VII. 56 (iv 84), translated by E. M. Hare, *Gradual Sayings* IV (London: Luzac & Co., 1965), pp. 49-50.

¹³ *Ibid.*, VI. 40 (iii 339-40), translated by E. M. Hare, *Gradual Sayings* IV (London: Luzac & Co., 1965), pp. 239-240.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, V. 20 (iii 247), translated by E. M. Hare, *Gradual Sayings* III (London: Luzac & Co., 1965), pp. 180-181.

¹⁵ See *Kindred Sayings* IV (London: Luzac & Co., 1965), pp. 151-153. For the Chinese version, see T 2.175b-c.

¹⁶ The classic description of the four states of mindfulness is in the *Mahāsatipatthāna*, found in *Dīgha-Nikāya* II and T 1.582b-584b, and translated in *Sacred Books of the Buddhists* III (London: Luzac & Co., 1966), pp. 322-348.

¹⁷ Translated by E. M. Hare, *Graduate Sayings*, Vol. III (London: Luzac & Co., 1961), p. 132.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

¹⁹ Étienne Lamotte, *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien* (Louvain: Institut Orientaliste, 1958), p. 217.

²⁰ This list is slightly re-arranged from that found in É. Lamotte, *Ibid.*, pp. 218-221. The dates for all sources are adopted from Lamotte, except for the date of the translation of the *Vibhāṣa śāstra* by Hsüan-tsang which comes from *Bussō kaisetsu daijiten* I.32b.

²¹ See Kumoi, "Hōmetsu shisō no genryū", pp. 293-295, and especially É. Lamotte, *Histoire*, pp. 217-222, 385-391, and 424-431.

²² T 12.717-728.

²³ T 12.341.

²⁴ T 12.1070-1077, #386.

²⁵ Yamada Ryūjō, "Rengemen-gyō ni tsuite", in *Yamaguchi Hakase kanreki kinen* (Kyoto: 1955), pp. 110-123.

²⁶ *The Questions of King Milinda*, Part I, translated by T.W. Rhys Davids, *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXXV (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1890), p. 190.

²⁷ The order for the disappearance of the scriptures is also listed in the *Sammoha-Vinodanī* 432, a commentary on the *Vibhāṅga* (an Abhidharma text in Pāli). G. P. Malalasekera summarizes the sequence of disappearance as listed in this text in his *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names* II. 304.

²⁸ According to the *Sumaṅgala Vilāsinī* III.899ff, after the Buddha's teaching has become extinct, all relics will be miraculously united in the Mahābodhi sanctuary where they will form the golden body of the Buddha, together with the aura. Then they will all be destroyed by fire. This is the third nirvāṇa, called *dhātu-parinibbāna* in Pāli. See Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names* II.303.

²⁹ Buddhaghosa, *Manorathapūraṇī* I.87-91, as summarized by G. Coedès, "Le 2,500 Anniversaire du Bouddha," *Diogenes* 15 (Juillet, 1956), pp. 118-119.

³⁰ Lamotte, *Histoire*, p. 215.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

³² This has been partially translated by Henry Clarke Warren, *Buddhism in Translation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1896; reprint ed., New York: Atheneum, 1963), pp. 481-486.

³³ G. Coedès, "The Traibhūmikathā Buddhist Cosmology and Treaty on Ethics," *East and West* VII.4 (Jan 1957), p. 350.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 350. Anna Seidel recently reports a more detailed study is offered by Achaimbault and G. Coedès in *Les trois mondes*, Publication de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient, Vol. 89 (Paris, 1973).

³⁵ Richard F. Gombrich, *Precept and Practice: Traditional Buddhism in the Rural Highlands of Ceylon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 284, n. 28.

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 285-286. See above p. 157.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 287.

³⁸ T 49.23a. 15-27.

³⁹ T 42.18a, 5-c.1.

⁴⁰ T 53.1005a-1013a.

⁴¹ T 33.42b.12-426b.18.

⁴² T 37.116a. 15-26.

⁴³ This idea is in the second group of texts compiled by Kumoi, viz., *Samyutta-Nikāya* ii, 223-225; T 2.226c.7 and 419b.25.

⁴⁴ T 9.11c. 29-12a.4. Cf. also T 9.21c 26-28; 22a. 13-14; 50c. 8-11.

⁴⁵ T 8.546b.27ff. See also Edward Conze, *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines* (Bollingen: Four Seasons Foundation, 1973), pp. 121-122.

⁴⁶ Yabuki Keiki, *Sangaikyō no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1927), pp. 215-219. Yamamoto Bukkotsu provides a concise discussion of these including the convenience of references to the Taishō Tripiṭaka in his *Dōshaku kyōgaku no kenkyū* (Kyoto: 1957), pp. 251-259.

⁴⁷ T 42.18a-b.

⁴⁸ T 12.1013c.5ff.

⁴⁹ T 13.379c. 5-10.

⁵⁰ T 3.211b. 26-27.

⁵¹ For an extensive analysis of this text, see *BKD* IX.125d-129b.

⁵² T 24.1094a. 17.

⁵³ T 14.21a.25 and 50c.22.

⁵⁴ The *CSTCC* has conflicting dates. See T 55.7b.13 and 48c.3.

⁵⁵ T 25.681b. 7.

⁵⁶ T 8.749a.26-b.2.

⁵⁷ T 30.1b. 29-c.1.

⁵⁸ T 47.48c.7. Some have suggested that Huai-kan actually was quoting the *Pei-hua ching*, not the *Ta-pei ching*. See Kazue Kyōichi, *Nihon no mappō shisō* (1961), p. 23, n. 21.

⁵⁹ T 42.18b. 3-4.

⁶⁰ T 27.918a. 10-17.

⁶¹ *Abhidharmakośa* VIII, 39c-d, translated by La Vallée-Poussin, Vol. V, p. 220.

⁶² T 49.2a.16; T 49.6a.7; T 24.405a.7; T 2.177b.23; and T 50.126b.26. Lamotte, *Histoire*, p. 213.

⁶³ T 13.363a. 29-b.5.

⁶⁴ T 47.4b. 3-8.

⁶⁵ T 42.18a. 23-27.

⁶⁶ T 24.796c. 24-29. See Lamotte, *Histoire*, pp. 215-216.

⁶⁷ T 8.749a. 26-b.2. The Sanskrit text does not make reference to the “last 500 years” but to the “occurrence of the destruction of the good law” (*saddharma-vipraloṣe vartamāne*). See Edward Conze, ed., *Vajracchedikā* (Roma, 1957), p. 30. Cf. T 8.750b.5.

⁶⁸ T 9.61a.23 and b.9-10; 62a.9ff; 54b.29 and c.21.

⁶⁹ T 9.37c.29; 38b.2; 38c.4.

⁷⁰ T 12.277c. 19-21.

⁷¹ T 12.279a. 11-12.

⁷² T 9.34a. 20-23, following the translation of Senchu Murano, *The Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Law* (Tokyo: 1974), p. 174.

- ⁷³ T 9.39a. 14ff.
- ⁷⁴ T 13.582b. 25-26.
- ⁷⁵ T 13.700b. 13-19.
- ⁷⁶ T 9.365b. 12-18.
- ⁷⁷ T 50.359c.16
- ⁷⁸ T 50.359c.3. See Zürcher, *Buddhist Conquest* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1959), pp. 247 and 408-409, n. 84.
- ⁷⁹ T 55.77a. 23-29.
- ⁸⁰ T 25.57a. 14-15. Cf. *CSTCC*, T 54. 74c-75b. The dates of Āśvaghōṣa and Nāgārjuna were standard reference points. Cf. T'an-luan (T 40.827a.6ff) and Chih-i (T 33.285b. 20-21).
- ⁸¹ T 25.57b.13.
- ⁸² T 12.1013c. 7-9. Chi-tsang notes this conflict, and compares the *Mo-ho-mo-yeh ching* dating with Seng-jui's Preface to the translation of the *Ch'eng-shih lun* which places Āśvaghōṣa's birth at 350 years after the death of the Buddha, and Nāgārjuna's at 530 years. See T 42.18b. 24-26.
- ⁸³ T 40.827a. 6-7.
- ⁸⁴ T 53.1006b. 12-15.
- ⁸⁵ Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, ed., *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism in India*, translated from the Tibetan by Lama Chimpa Alaka Chattopadhyaya (Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1970), p. 121. For further reference, see Max Walleser, "The Life of Nāgārjuna from Tibetan and Chinese Sources," *Asia Major, Hirth Anniversary Volume* (London: Arthur Probsthain, 1923), pp. 421-455.
- ⁸⁶ T 49.23a.
- ⁸⁷ Takao Giken, "Mappō shisō to shoka no taido," *Shina Bukkyō shigaku* I.1 (April 1937), p. 2. T'ang Yung-t'ung claims that T'an-wu-ch'an of the early fifth century mentions the three-period theory of 500, 1000, and 10,000 years respectively, but I have not been able to verify this. See his *Han-Wei Liang-Chin Nan-pei chao Fo-chiao-shih* (1938), Vol. 2, p. 290.
- ⁸⁸ T 12.421c.26.
- ⁸⁹ T 12.472a. 15-16, Cf. T 12.473b.23ff.
- ⁹⁰ See Nakamura Hajime's summary of Japanese research on the subject in his "A Critical Survey of Mahayana and Esoteric Buddhism," *Acta Asiatica* 7 (1964), p. 49.
- ⁹¹ Ibid., p. 50.
- ⁹² T 12.643b. 25-26.
- ⁹³ Cf. also Mizutani Kōshō, "Bukkyō ni okeru kiki ishiki no ichi kōsatsu," *IBK* VIII.2 (March 1960), pp. 606-609, which focuses on crisis in relation to the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*.
- ⁹⁴ T 12.505c. 14-15.
- ⁹⁵ T 12.472a.22ff. See Jikido Takasaki, "The *Tathāgata* Theory in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*," *IBK* XIX.2 (March 1971), pp. 1024-1015.
- ⁹⁶ T 12.386b. 15-16.
- ⁹⁷ T 12.417b.5.
- ⁹⁸ T 12.473c. 14-474a. 19.
- ⁹⁹ T 12.266a.7. Cf. also T 12.273c.5.
- ¹⁰⁰ T 12.348a. 20-25.
- ¹⁰¹ This account is based on Nakamura's *Bukkyōgo daijiten* 369b, Mochizuki's *Bukkyō daijiten* 1018c-1021c and 1259c-1261a, and *Abhidharma-kośa* III.89d-94b, translated by de la Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu* 6 Volumes (Paris: Paul Geunther: 1923-1931), III.181-194.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ T 9.7b. 23-27.

¹⁰⁴ T 3.119b.9 and 13; 226b.11 and 29; etc.

¹⁰⁵ In the early sixth century, Seng-yu lists the title and says it was included in the "Old Catalog" which was earlier than his (T 55.19a.13). Also, in the late seventh century the text was in use since Tao-shih quotes it in his encyclopedia of 668 A.D. (T 53.1005c.15ff).

¹⁰⁶ T 12.340c.21.

¹⁰⁷ T 40.826b.1.

¹⁰⁸ T 47.12b.14-15.

¹⁰⁹ T 13.380c.11, referred to in T 47.13c.10. Cf. T 47.4b.25.

¹¹⁰ T 37.238c. 6-8.

¹¹¹ T 37.272a. 19-20. Although he undoubtedly accepted the idea of *mo-fa* (T 37.246a.2), the phrase rarely appears in the works of Shan-tao. Cf. Julian Pas, "Shan-tao's Commentary on the *Amṛtāyur-Buddhānusmṛiti-sūtra*" (Ph.D. dissertation, McMaster University, 1973), p. 281.

¹¹² *Abhidharmakośa* III.94a-b, translated by Vallée Poussin, III.192-3.

¹¹³ *Li-shih yüan-wen*, T 46.788a.6.

¹¹⁴ References to the Five Corruptions are scattered throughout the text (e.g., T 13.312c, 322c, 345c, 355a, 380c, 382a), as are references to the disappearance of the true Dharma (e.g., see T 13.370-380 especially). Nevertheless, the term *mo-fa* appears in only one place (T 13.267a.3,6), and here it is associated with fifteen corruptions, not five!

¹¹⁵ None of the texts listed by Seng-yu (d. 518) in his *Chu-san-tsang-chi-chi* (T 55.1-114) contain the idea of three periods. Although the *Lotus Sūtra* contains the term *mo-fa*, it is not used in this sense. See Yamada Ryūjō, "Mappō shisō ni tsuite," *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku kenkyū* (hereafter *IBK*) IV.2 (March '56), pp. 361-362.

¹¹⁶ T 46.786c. 4-6. The authenticity of the *Li-shih-yüan-wen* has been questioned by Etani Ryukai, "Nangaku Eshi no Ryū seiganmon wa gisaku ka," *IBK* VI.2 (March 1958), pp. 524-527.

¹¹⁷ T 46.787a. 4-6.

¹¹⁸ T 46.786b. 27-28.

¹¹⁹ T 12.1013b-c.

¹²⁰ T 50.432a.24-433b.6.

¹²¹ T 13.298-381. See *Bussho Kaisetsu daijiten* VII. 485a-c.

¹²² T 13.1-408. See *Bussho Kaisetsu daijiten* VII. 477-483.

¹²³ T 13.379c. 5-12.

¹²⁴ T 13.375b.28-c.4 and 377a.25.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 375c.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 377b-c.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 376b.27-c.13.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 363a.29-b.5. These five periods were adopted by Tao-ch'ō who placed himself in the fourth 500-year period (T 47.4b.16-20).

¹²⁹ T 15.573c.6, 13-14, 17, 28; 574a.26; 575c.21; etc.

¹³⁰ See above. For a discussion of the thought of *mo-fa* and the translations of Narendrayāśas, see Yamada Ryūjō, "Mappō shisō ni tsuite," *IBK* IV.2 (March '56), pp. 361-370; Kazue Kyoichi, *Nihon no mappō shisō* (1961), pp. 11-23; and Nogami Shunjō, *Chūgoku Jōdo sansoden* (1970), pp. 106-110.

¹³¹ *Bussho kaisetsu daijiten* VII.323a. Tao-hsüan locates it more generally in the T'ien-hou reign period (566-571). See T 55.289a.7-8.

¹³² T 16.651c. 12-14.

¹³³ T 47.5c. 17-29 summarizes T 16.651b. 4-6 and 651c. 6-18.

¹³⁴ T 33.520c. 2-4.

¹³⁵ Nogami Shunjō, “Chūgoku ni okeru mappō shisō no tenkai ni tsuite,” *Yamazaki Sensei Taikan Kinenkai Tōyō shigaku ronshū* (1967), pp. 344-346.

¹³⁶ Yabuki Keiki, *Sangaikyō no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1927), p.225. Huai-kan wrote a century later that Hsin-hsing believed *mo-fa* was to appear 1000 years after the death of the Buddha (T 47.48a.16ff).

¹³⁷ T 49.105b.16-c.3.

¹³⁸ T 47.13c.8-11.

¹³⁹ If all the facts were known, this might also have been true for India — at least through the formation of Tantrism and up until the twelfth century. The development of Buddhism in India in its later stages and the conditions of its final disappearance are still unclear. See Lalmani Joshi, *Studies in the Buddhistic Culture of India (During the 7th and 8th Centuries A.D.)* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1967) and Steven Darian, “Buddhism in Bihar from the Eighth to the Twelfth Century with Special Reference to Nālandā,” *Asiatische Studien Études Asiatiques* XXV (1971), pp. 335-352.

RELIGIONS NEW AND NOT SO NEW

(Review article)

R. J. Z. WERBLOWSKY

Students of religion are often tempted, for understandable reasons, to interrupt their serious researches and be lured in the direction of the sociology of scholarly as well as pseudo-scholarly activity. Why do certain subjects suddenly become “fads”? Why is everybody taking to writing on this or that subject? Why did every half-baked journalist or graduate divinity student become overnight an authority on “cults” after the Jonestown massacre? Of course every journalist wants to cash in on a subject that is still “hot”. No publisher could hope to turn even the best-researched MS. about Vatican II into a bestseller, of it is sent to press three years after the Council. The rash of “quickie paperbacks” about the People’s Temple and “the unaccountable millions of words devoted to Jonestown” (both phrases are taken from Midge Decter’s essay “The Politics of Jonestown” in *COMMENTARY*, May 1979 — the only sane and really instructive piece of writing on the subject) are not really all that unaccountable. Still, one wonders why it was precisely in the sixties that so many books and studies appeared about the so-called “new religions” of Japan. *The Rush-Hour of the Gods* (thus the title of H. Neill McFarland’s fine book, 1967) was also the rush-hour of books about the *shin shūkyō*. Macro-comparatists survey the “cult scene” from their grandstand, taking either an enthusiastic or moderately temperate positive view (e.g., the new religions, oriental cults etc. as the harbingers of a new religious consciousness¹ and of a long overdue transvaluation of western rationalist, instrumental, manipulative values — other pejorative epithets to be added ad lib), or else camouflaging their (often justifiably) negative attitudes behind a smokescreen of “objective” sociologese. Others simply choose “their” cult viz. movement viz. church viz. sect. viz. denomination² and produce monograph-type studies.

The trouble with most writings on new sects is that their authors seem to have forgotten (or never learned) about history. After all, practically all the great religions began as quaint sects. We think of those odd Jewish sectarians in Jerusalem and Galilee (giving rise to what became known subsequently as Christianity), or the strange and small group of Arabs in Mecca listening to Muhammad. Perhaps the interesting problem is not so much the origin of sects as the question why and how some did “make it” whilst others did not. An even more interesting problem concerns the forms and degrees of hostility provoked by new sects (when? where? in what social i.e., cultural and/or political contexts?). Fortunately the 19th and early 20th centuries are still close enough to prevent even unhistorical minds from forgetting them completely. Aimee Semple McPherson and Father Divine may no longer be with us, but the Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventists, Christian Scientists and Bahais still are, not to speak of Mr. H. Armstrong’s “Worldwide Church of God” and many others. Also addicts of *Shin shūkyō* studies know that they cannot begin with the Soka Gakkai, and that many of the “new” churches were founded *before* Meiji. Long before American “study of religions” discovered, and jumped on, the bandwagon of the “new religions”, the first edition had appeared in Germany of K. Hutten, *Seher, Grübler, Enthusiasten: Das Buch der Sekten*, 1950, discussing well over fifty groups and cults according to a typology that need not concern us here. The 10th ed. of Hutten, considerably revised and augmented, appeared in 1966!

Of course Hutten was far from complete. Whilst Armstrong’s “Church of God” has a longish chapter, the American snake-handling cults (described, *int. al.* by Weston LaBarre) are not mentioned. One movement that has since attracted much attention could not be mentioned by Hutten, because it started on its spectacular career only after the Korean War. I am referring, of course, to the Rev. Sun Myung Moon’s Unification Church, like many of the more recent cults, a church of the young. (Hence also the charge of their seducing the innocent minds of the “kids”). The doctrines of the church (the “Divine Principle”, based on Rev. Moon’s teachings but not authored by him though published with his *imprimatur* and full authority) are easily accessible to every

reader. The point that needs emphasising here is that no matter how “odd”, “primitive” or “crazy” the theological systems of the new churches may appear (and they are being developed with amazing speed!) when compared to the allegedly more “reasonable”, “mature” and “spiritually and philosophically profound” doctrines of the established denominations, they are incredibly, even bewilderingly, complex and complicated. In this respect there is little difference between the Unification Church or the Japanese Mahikari (viz. Bunmei) Kyōdan. And, as every student of religion knows, religious systems can be primitive, naive and fantastically complex all at the same time. The Unification Church by now takes the initiative in organising symposia and publishing the proceedings, or otherwise commissioning or assisting studies, apparently fully confident that these would be beneficial to its public image. In fact, the church has recently achieved further respectability in an unexpected way. A recent issue of the *Bulletin* of the Harvard Divinity School (February-March, 1979) carried a write-up about Unification Church members studying at HDS. The write-up is good for the image of the Unification Church and perhaps even more essential for Harvard’s self-image as a non-bigoted and open-minded institution. After Black Religion and Women-in-Religion this is surely a masterpiece of academic one-upmanship. The literature about the church can by now be divided into books distributed by the church itself to interested readers (the reasonable inference being that these books are sympathetic or at least not hostile), and such as are not.

To the former group belongs Prof. F. Sontag’s volume.³ As the title of one of the chapters indicates (“Charges and Responses”) there are enough charges around to arouse curiosity. Prof. Sontag visited most of the church’s centres and training institutions (as the guest of the church) and had any number of frank talks with leaders and followers. The result is a very human and humane piece of superior journalism. Here you have a philosopher (theologian?) curious to know what it is all about, genuinely worried by the strident accusations raised by the media and mainline denominations, and determined to be as fair and understanding as is humanly possible. Most “charges” Prof. Sontag finds to be unfounded and based on a myopic and negative mentality. On one or two points —

being very honest — he suspends judgment. My only criticism is levelled not at the book but at the dust-jacket which proclaims the former to be an “In-Depth Study of the Man and the Movement”. But we should not condemn Prof. Sontag for the sins and publicity-stunts of his publisher. As has been said before, the book is a piece of very human and humane reporting, almost an *examen de conscience*, though certainly not a “study” and even less “in-depth”.

The Unification Church’s Theological Seminary in Barrytown (up-State New York) prides itself on a faculty consisting not only of church members but of scholars drawn from all major denominations, including Catholics and Jews. Two recent volumes of symposia proceedings merit brief attention. One⁴ deals with aspects of the church’s theology and discusses its principal doctrines, its relation to traditional Christianity, its style of organisation and leadership, its millennialism and eschatology plus some other subjects. The other symposium⁵ covers, in part, similar ground but the participants include also outsiders. Hence the questions raised are not exclusively “in-group” questions. In return, things said in defence of the church (or at least in rebuttal of certain charges) acquire more weight. After all, it is one thing to have Colonel Park complaining about persecution by the Frazier Committee, and quite another to have Prof. Harvey Cox inveighing against “Myths Sanctioning Religious Persecution” (*ibid.*, p. 3ff.).

The subject of persecution brings us to the last book concerning the Moon Church on this reviewer’s desk.⁶ Its format is that of a collection of diverse essays and chapters culled from various publications (including Prof. Sontag’s — this creates an impression of scrupulous fairness and evenhandedness), yet essentially it is a crusading pamphlet. The message is clear: scholars are a venal crowd (we all knew that long ago anyway), but some are more venal than others, especially those who attend the Moon-sponsored and funded annual conferences of the International Cultural Foundation. The fact that these conferences are, from a purely academic point of view, among the most successful and scientifically rewarding (thus the unanimous verdict of those venal and sinful scholars who did participate — although the writer of these lines would hasten to add that he entertains the highest respect for those colleagues who, for reasons of conscience, refuse to attend) is irrele-

vant: the sinful participants are sinfully allowing themselves to be abused and manipulated by the Rev. Moon, if only in the sense of helping him to confer status on himself and his church. The chapters in the book include excerpts from Mr. Moon's speeches as well as articles by assorted scholars. We learn all about the Korean lobby and the other disreputable activities and connections of the church. In a charming exhibition of naiveté the editor admits (p. xvii) that "we have yet to cope with a religion that turns political". Alas, the professional historian of religion, brought up on Confucianism, Judaism (whether Moses, the prophets or the pharisees), Islam (whether Muhammad's or the Ayatullah Humeini's) etc. wistfully reflects that he still has to learn how to cope with that strange American animal called the separation of Church and State. The most rewarding essay in the volume is easily the chapter on "The Last Civil Religion" by Th. Robbins, D. Anthony, M. Doucas and Th. Curtis (pp. 46-73). The most repulsive one is undoubtedly the chapter on "Jews and Judaism in Rev. Moon's Divine Principle". The author(s), for reasons of charity, shall go unnamed except for noting that he (they) is (are) connected with an organisation that in earlier years was not always conspicuous for crusading fervour. Its later impressive achievements and many merits notwithstanding, there was a time, when the Nazi fury broke over European Jewry during World War II, that this organisation was more conspicuous for its timidity and soft-peddling. No thundering *j'accuse* but "hush-hush was the word" (that at least was the opinion expressed at the time by the distinguished journalist Dorothy Thompson; the writer of these lines does not possess sufficient expertise to venture a considered opinion on this particular period). What seems fairly obvious is that the author(s) seem(s) to have overlooked the fact that Mr. Moon grew up in a Far Eastern environment totally devoid of Jews, though there are faint traces of a dim awareness that in such circumstances a Christian can get all the antisemitism in the world and more from merely reading the New Testament, the Church Fathers and the standard N.T. commentaries. (Was Shakespeare, in Jewless Elizabethan England, "antisemitic" when he wrote the Merchant of Venice?). The one interesting point in this whole affair is the significant evolution of the Rev. Moon's attitudes after he settled in the U.S. The Korean

evangelist for whom Jews had at first been a purely theologico-literary entity, became an American church-leader in a pluralistic setting in which live Jews played a conspicuous social, civic and cultural role. The number of Jewish converts (not much more in the Unification Church than in Hare Krishna or other movements) of course raised a hue and cry, on the principle that screaming is much easier than a searching examination of conscience regarding the religious failures of a middle-class community which loses its sensitive and intelligent and alienated youngsters to a Korean (*horribile dictu*) right wing (even more horrible) evangelist.

The hostility — organised as well as spontaneous — to Mr. Moon's Unification Church reminds the student of the Japanese hostility to the Soka Gakkai, especially in their earlier *shakabuku*-proselytising phase. Altogether the Far Eastern background helps to explain many aspects of the Unification Church which the student of e.g., Japanese religions easily takes in his stride whereas scholars brought up on western-type revival movements seem slightly bewildered. Thus it may safely be predicted that after the passing away of Rev. Moon, the mantle will fall on the shoulders of one of his direct descendants (whether child or grandchild is irrelevant) following the standard Far Eastern pattern.

It would seem that what needs explaining is not so much the Unification Church itself as the hostility to it. How can one explain the shamelessness with which kidnapping parents employing paid "de-programmers" accuse the church of "brainwashing"? There are several working hypotheses which, to be sure, would have to be carefully tested. There is the fact that the Rev. Moon is Korean — and Koreans are not particularly liked, neither in Asia nor in the U.S. Things might have taken a different turn had Mr. Moon been a Tibetan tulku, an Indian guru (with or without the title "His Divine Holiness"), or a Japanese Zen master. The street-begging, soliciting and fund-raising ("testifying") activities of the young devotees do not go down too well with the ethos of an American society which in this respect duplicates the characteristic Confucian reaction to Buddhist mendicancy. Even Catholic "mendicant" orders have learned ways and means of making money by other methods than begging at street corners or on doorsteps. The Salvation Army, it is true, solicit in the streets, but visibly to con-

vert the donations into hot soup and shelters for the down-and-out and not for the benefit of their church. The American public condescendingly forgives its Sikh-type youngsters their “funny” dress and turbans and the “divine music” wafting through their Golden Temple vegetarian restaurants, not to speak of the comfortable *shakti*-sandals sold in their Golden Emporium shops: these guys clearly live up to the sacred American ethos — they don’t beg but work hard to earn an honest living; proof that even Gringo-Sikhs can share the Protestant Work Ethic. Last but not least there is the Unification Church’s anti-communist crusading politics. It is more than probable that the average American liberal loathes Communism and is mortally afraid of it. It is indeed wonderful to live in the Bay Area, to encourage and even protect the Reverend Jim Jones, and to denounce the “Establishment” and all the evils incarnate in the American way of life — as long as one can do so cheaply and at discount rates, and with the knowledge that one will not end up in the Gulag Archipelago. How wonderful to be a protesting student at Harvard, Chicago, Berkeley, Kent State or wherever (especially when the draft hangs over your head), in the safe knowledge that the corrupt and unredeemable establishment will spare you the fate in store (in similar circumstances) for your counterparts in Moscow, Prague, East Berlin and Peking. Perhaps the really unforgivable sin of Mr. Moon was to have let the cat out of the bag and to have said the things every liberal would like to say but will not, must not, cannot, dare not say because looking in the mirror (narcissistic as most of them are) he is afraid of the reflection of the late Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin grinning back at him. And, as the Baker in Lewis Carroll’s *The Hunting of the Snark* would have said, “this notion I cannot endure”. A mere hypothesis — but perhaps one worth exploring.

It goes without saying that the “explanations” proffered in the preceding paragraph are insufficient by themselves. There are many local and regional variations that have to be taken into account. This applies both to the activities of the Church and to the manifestations of hostility. Thus it would appear that many of the accusations (e.g. bringing youngsters into the communes under false pretences; using “heavenly deception” — or less heavenly one; lowering the resistance of the prospective converts by under-

nourishment, lack of sleep, enforced isolation from the “normal” environment etc.)⁷ are specific to the Californian scene but not typical of other Unification Church centres. (After all, everybody agrees that it would be grossly unfair to judge the U.S.A. on the basis of observations made in the Bay Area!) As regards hostility, for instance, the accusation that Mr. Moon “destroys families” looms large in (at least theoretically) still family-oriented France, whereas in Germany’s *vaterlose Gesellschaft* (to use Mitscherlich’s term) other arguments are used. Nevertheless the fact remains that a general phenomenon also requires general explanations.

The paradise for research on “new religions”, however, still is Japan. The term itself implies that in spite of doctrinal, social and other differences, and in spite of the wide chronological span, these movements have enough in common to justify treating them as one phenomenon and under one heading. Some of the new religions are by now pretty old. In fact, a number of the “old” new religions had their beginnings already before Meiji, whereas the “new” new religions date from the forties of this century or even later. Two recent books deal with one of the oldest (Tenri) as well as one of the newest (Mahikari) *shin shukyo* respectively. The Foundress of Tenri-kyo had her first revelations long before the accession of Emperor Meiji. The revelations continued during Meiji until her death. Students of the Tenri Scriptures, and especially of the revelations written down by the Foundress in the *Ofudesaki* between the years 1869-1882, have paid much attention to the names by which the Deity manifesting itself in Oya-sama was called (viz. called itself). Tenri theologians have paid no less attention to the variety of the Deity’s names than Old Testament scholars have lavished on Elohim, Yahweh etc. Is there a system underlying the usage in the Scriptures, reflecting some kind of theological evolution or a “history of revelation”? Does the use of certain names permit the sub-division of the *Ofudesaki* into well-defined units or periods? What does the differential occurrence of Oyagami, Tsuki-Hi, Tenri-o-no-mikoto etc. imply? The last patriarch (*shimbashira*) of Tenri-kyo (third generation from the Foundress and father of the present incumbent; he was also a graduate in the History of Religions of the University of Tokyo) devoted a scholarly theological study to the subject. The solid, comprehensive and fully

documented monograph by Dr. J. Laube⁸ is a valuable addition to our knowledge of Tenri-kyo teaching and a model of careful research. Combining the approaches and methods of History of Religions as well as of theology, he has succeeded in making a significant contribution to both disciplines — it being understood that “theology” in this context means the theology of Tenri-kyo.

On the other end of the chronological spectrum is the Mahikari sect which, though belonging to the Omoto-lineage (which began in 1892), developed about twenty years ago. (The official Mahikari date is 27 February, 1959, at 5 a.m. The Founder, also known as “Saviour”, after a ministry of fifteen years “ascended to the Divine Spiritual World” in 1974. His death was followed by a schism in the sect). There are many similarities with the somewhat older Sekai Kyusei Kyo (also known as Meshia-Kyo i.e., Church of World Messianity or World Salvation) of which the Founder of Mahikari had, as a matter of fact, been a member for some time. The subject of these similarities with, and possible dependence on, Omoto and Meshia-Kyo teachings is studiously avoided in Mahikari circles. Even so the sect presents a number of extremely interesting features. As is well known, healing, improvement of karma (including that of one’s ancestors) and this — worldly success are major elements of very many *shin shukyo*, but Mahikari — also known as Bunmei⁹ Kyodan; its official designation according to a recent decision by the leadership is Su Kyo Mahikari) — presents some very special features. In many ways it is far more “primitive” than other sects, and although its cosmological, anthropological, *heilsgeschichtliche* and other doctrines are incredibly complicated and complex (and in part also based on some weird theories derived from western authors whom other westerners would unhesitatingly describe as cranks), the basic theory and practice are intimately linked with belief in spirit possessions, exorcisms, and healing (viz. repairing) by radiating the divine light on the afflicted person, part of the body, or object — the kind of thing which some scholars would treat as offshoots from earlier shamanistic traditions. This inevitably raises also a host of sociological questions: what kind of people go in for this sort of thing? From what classes, sexes, age-occupation- and income-groups does a sect like Mahikari recruit its followers in the fully

literate and technologically advanced and even over-developed Japan of today? What kinds of psychological and/or social anxieties, frustrations or deprivations are relevant to an understanding of the phenomenon? What alternatives to e.g. frustrated social mobility or other aspirations in the larger society, does the sectarian micro-society offer? How do fully educated and trained medical doctors rationalise (e.g. in their “medical congresses”) their belief in the superior efficacy of the *okiyome*-exorcism? (*Okiyome* is the radiating of the divine light by the Mahikari practitioner through his raised hand — which concentrates this light as in a lens — to the patient or object afflicted by illness or spirit possession). *Okiyome*, by the way, works only if the practitioner wears the special holy amulet and has recited the appropriate incantatory prayer. This prayer, the *Amatsu Norigoto*, shows similarities with the *Amatsu Norito* of the Sekai-Kyusei-Kyo and beyond that with the *Omoto Norigoto* which, in its turn, is an adaptation of ancient Shinto formulae. The *okiyome* itself is similar to the *gojorei* of the Meshia Kyo and the healing practices of some other sects. Clearly a detailed study (or “in-depth study” as American usage is wont to call it) combining a description of the sect’s doctrines and practices as well as its organisation, hierarchy and leadership-followers patterns on the local, regional and national level, with an analysis of the mental attitudes and experiences of the believers was an urgent desideratum. This lacuna has now been filled by Prof. Winston Davis’s excellent study¹⁰ which applies in exemplary fashion all available research methods and techniques: a large number of personal interviews, participant observation, and the use of psychological and sociological, qualitative as well as quantitative (statistical) methods. Dr. Winston Davis is not a historian of religion playing the sociologist, but a historian of religion who knows how to make felicitous and competent use of all available, including sociological, methods. For that reason his *Dojo* has almost paradigmatic value and should be counted as a major contribution not only to our knowledge of the Mahikari sect or of the Japanese *shin shykyo*, but also to the study of the History of Religions as such. Criticism on points of detail, or even of more fundamental matters of approach and perspective is, of course, always possible. Students of Japanese *shin shukyō* have often remarked on the important, and perhaps even decisive, role of the sense of community and fellowship which they foster. This

holds true as much of the *hoza* type of meetings (e.g. in the Rishsho-Kosei-Kai or Reiyu-kai) as of shared mediumistic experiences (such as e.g., the *kojo-sesshin* of Shinnyo-en). Precisely Dr. Davis's essentially sociological approach leaves the reader wondering why he concentrates so much on the individual-magic aspects to the relative neglect of the factor of community experience.

Of course Christianity too, especially after its renewed entry into Japan in the 19th century and more especially in its Protestant forms, could be described as one of Japan's "new religions". C. Caldarola's study¹¹ is a valuable contribution to this brand of *shin shukyo* research. After an opening chapter on "American Missionaries and Japanese Christians" the author devotes the bulk of his study to K. Uchimura's "No-Church" (*Mukyokai*) movement which he correctly analyses in terms of an attempted adaptation of, and compromise between, two sets of loyalties and as a response to the specific culture shocks induced by Christianity (including particularist and universalist aspirations, Zen and Confucian influences etc.). After all, nobody could possibly assert that Japan as such, with its proliferation of Buddhist and Shinto sects, sub-sects, and sub-sub-sects is basically opposed to sectarian denominationalism. Hence the *Mukyokai* has to be accounted for in different terms.

If the "new religions" are a phenomenon *sui generis*, no matter whether their immediate background is Shinto or Buddhist, then it should occasion no surprise that Japan has also spawned some Christian *shin shukyo*. The Kami-no-Makuya sect ("The Lord's Tabernacle") founded by the late Ikuro Teshima is a good example. Typically Japanese in its concentration of authority, emotionalism, charismatic origins (and to some extent still continuing charismatic features), elements from traditional folk-religion (including e.g., fire-walking), plus a strong "hang-up" on the Bible and especially on the Old Testament — all these assure the *makuya* sect's place in the history of both Japanese Christianity and Japanese "new religions". Dr. Caldarola has done a fine piece of work. With an index at its end, the work would have been even finer.

¹ Cf. the review by Eileen Barker in *NUMEN* XXVI (1979), pp. 274-7.

² This string of nouns is not meant to be facetious. We are all conscious of our debt to Weber, Troeltsch *et al.*, and these giants would be the first to acknowledge that ideal-type concepts are not labels to be stuck on bottles in a chemist's shop. If there is anything more objectionable than the obsession of labelling, than it is the obsessive Troeltsch-flogging of some contemporary would-be sociologists.

³ Frederick Sontag, *Sun Myung Moon and the Unification Church*, Abingdon (Nashville), 1977.

⁴ M. Darrol Bryant and Susan Hodges, *Exploring Unification Theology* (2nd ed., 1978), distributed by The Rose of Sharon Press, Inc., New York. The first ed. had been published by the Barrytown Seminary through the Edwin Mellen Press.

⁵ M. Darrel Bryant and Herbert W. Richardson, *A Time for Consideration: A Scholarly Appraisal of the Unification Church*, The Edwin Mellen Press (New York and Toronto), 1978.

⁶ Irving Louis Horowitz, *Science, Sin and Scholarship: The Politics of Reverend Moon and the Unification Church*, M.I.T. Press (Cambridge, Mass.), 1978, pp. 290, \$12.50. Over-fastidious minds will be greatly relieved by the knowledge that also the M.I.T. Press evidently considers alliteration an acceptable method of academic book promotion.

⁷ These practices viz. allegations are described in several, partly auto-biographical books reviewed (together with the Irving L. Horowitz anthology) in the *New York Review of Books* of Oct. 25, 1979, by Francine du Plessix Gray ("The Heavenly Deception"). In order to see this accusing and condemnatory article in perspective, one should bear in mind that Ms. Gray is herself a cultist — though her cult-heroes are the dissenting radicals and *contestataires* in the great establishment churches like Ivan Ilie or the Berrigans (see F. du Plessix Gray, *Divine Disobedience*, 1969) and not the Moonies.

⁸ Johannes Laube, *Oyagami: Die heutige Gottesvorstellung der Tenrikyo* (Studien zur Japanologie, Band 14), Verlag Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 1978, pp. 322.

⁹ The words *hikari* as well as *mei* both signify "light".

¹⁰ Winston Davis, *Dojo: Magic and Exorcism in Modern Japan*, Stanford University Press, 1980, pp. 350, \$18.50.

¹¹ Carlo Caldarola, *Christianity: The Japanese Way* (E. J. Brill, Leiden), 1979, pp. viii + 234, \$29.— or D.Fl. 58.—.

CHALDAEAN ORACLES*

(Review article)

GEDALIAHU G. STROUMSA

In a letter sent to Hans Lewy in 1941, A. D. Nock wrote: "I look forward eagerly to your work on the Chaldaean Oracles, for this is a topic on which we greatly need new light".¹ *Habent sua fata libelli*. Lewy's book was published in Cairo only in 1956, by the Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, eleven years after the author's untimely death in Jerusalem. The single serious analysis of the book, by E. R. Dodds, appeared in 1961 under the title "New Light on the Chaldaean Oracles".² Yet, despite Dodds' review, this light has remained largely hidden until now.

The book, which had been out of print for years, was overwritten; a mistaken methodology, duly criticized by Dodds, involved repetitiousness.³ Moreover, it contained numerous misprints and was published without *indices*. (To be sure, these last defects were partly due to the inability of Lewy's colleagues at the Hebrew University to communicate directly with the publishers.) In any case, *Chaldaean Oracles and Theurgy* remains a unique attempt to deal in depth with one of the most difficult and important bodies of religious literature of Late Antiquity. It is to the credit of Professor Michel Tardieu, of the Section des Sciences Religieuses at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes in Paris, to have recognized the importance of Lewy's work and to have invested much labor (joined to his deep knowledge of later Greek philosophy) in a new publication, which succeeds in overcoming most of the first edition's drawbacks. In a series of *Compléments* (totalling approximately 220 pages) added to the photostatic reprint of *Chaldaean Oracles and Theurgy*, Tardieu provides a list of errata, addenda (compiled through consultation of Lewy's German manuscript draft), various *indices* (*locorum*, *verborum*, *rerum*, as well as references to modern scholarship), and a comprehensive concordance.⁴ The new edition is also supplemented by a reprint of Dodds' article and Pierre Hadot's fresh

evaluation of recent research on the Chaldaean Oracles, and of their place in the religious literature of Late Antiquity.

Thanks to Tardieu's efforts, Lewy's book will become much more easily accessible to a broader public than the handful of classicists who have until now worked on the Chaldaean Oracles. Indeed, Lewy envisaged his research as "a contribution to the history of religion" (*Chald. Or.* 312), fully convinced that the study of the religious history of Late Antiquity was a task that classicists should undertake in common with "theologians" (a term by which he probably meant Patristic scholars) and orientalists.

In Lewy's basic judgment, the Chaldaean Oracles belonged to the confluence of mysticism, magic and Platonism which formed the last phase of pagan religion. One remembers, for instance, the Emperor Julian's *engouement* for Jamblichus's commentary on the Oracles or the theurgic interests of his Neoplatonic teacher, Maximus of Ephesus.⁵ For more than 250 years, indeed, the Neoplatonists regarded the Oracles as their "Bible": Pophyry was the first philosopher to comment upon them. Marinus ends his *Life of Proclus* with his hero's observation: "Were I the ruler, I would, of all ancient books, keep only the Timaeus and the Oracles" (ch. 38, *in finem*). In fact, it is mainly thanks to the Neoplatonists' quotations that fragments of the Oracles have reached us. Indeed they belonged, to use the pregnant expression of John Dillon, to the "Platonic Underworld".⁶

Theourgos is probably the most important neologism to appear in the Chaldaean Oracles (cf. fr. 153 Des Places).⁷ The theurgist has two goals. By *acting upon* the gods, he intends (as does the philosopher) to *unite with* them. At the same time, this union implies a transformation of the soul itself. This direct action upon the gods is rendered possible by a new use of telestics, i.e., the art of consecrating statues.⁸ The *telestēs*, the purifying priest, seeks to "vivify" the statues of the gods. In the words of Victor Cousin: "*On n'évoqua plus seulement les dieux, on les invoqua*".

Lewy's study of the Platonic elements in the Chaldaean Oracles forms the most impressive part of his work, together with his attempt — sometimes too audacious — at a reconstruction of Chaldaean cultic practices. What remains indisputable — and here

Lewy's analysis is fully convincing — is that the core of Chaldaean practice consisted of the *anagōgē* (elevation): a sacrament of immortality through which the soul left the material world to return to its heavenly abode (more precisely: the fiery sun).

However, Lewy's attempt at a genetic study of Chaldean theology, as well as the terminology he uses, might appear much less successful to the historian of religion. The final chapter on the "Oriental elements" is also the weakest; Lewy shared with many scholars of his generation an undue propensity to appeal to Iranian influences.

Lewy describes the *anagōgē* as "eschatology absorbed in mysticism", or as a "spiritualization of sacramental practice [which] represents the final stage of a process which took place in many mystery religions" (*Chald. Or.* 421-22). This interpretation seems to me to be based on a fundamentally misleading terminology. On the one hand, there is no need to refer to eschatology, which is altogether foreign to the world of the Chaldaean Oracles; on the other hand, theurgy should be strongly differentiated from mysticism (as well as from magic).⁹ Moreover, the very concept of sacrament involves a rather developed conception of the relationship between spiritual realities and cultic practices. If at all to use a technical term of Christian theology in a broader sense, one should rather speak of a trend of increased sacramentalism in the religious thought of Late Antiquity. This phenomenon is observable in pagan as well as in Christian literature; indeed the Neoplatonists' infatuation with theurgy provides a typical example. From Porphyry and Jamblichus, a straight path leads to Proclus and Pseudo-Dionysius.¹⁰ The theoretization of spiritual matters is bound by nature to insist upon the *stages* which bring one to illumination or liberation. There is a weakening of mysticism, and a corresponding development of sacramentalism. In the words of J. M. Rist, "Where Plotinus is a mystic, Proclus seems to know only a theory of mysticism".¹¹

Another claim of Lewy is that in contrast to most mystery cults of the second century, the Chaldaean community did not represent the *aggiornamento* of a much older Greek tradition, but that as a newly founded cult, it exemplified the *Zeitgeist* with particular clarity. Yet this is no doubt true (at least) of Gnosticism and Hermetism as

well; indeed, the complex problem of the relationship between various Gnostic trends and the Chaldaean Oracles will remain a most interesting area of research. Striking similarities have been repeatedly noted,¹² but usually at random and without a serious attempt at a comparative analysis.

On this issue, Lewy remains more careful than scholars like Kroll, Bidez, or Cumont, who referred to the Chaldaeans as "pagan gnostics". He rightly underlines some basic differences between the Chaldaean system and Gnostic texts. The most obvious is that the Chaldaeans limited their hylophobia to the sublunar world: their positive evaluation of the gods of the stars and their belief in the role of the moon and the sun in the purification of the ascending soul leave no place for the tyranny of diabolic archons (*Chald. Or.* 390, 417). The notation of lexical similarities, such as *pleroma*, *bythos*, or *speudein* (Fr. 96, 18, 115 des Places,) striking as they may be, cannot replace a comparative structural analysis dealing with the thought patterns of the Chaldaean Oracles and the various Gnostic or Hermetic texts. Such research can find its inception in the numerous insights of Lewy. The new editor, Tardieu, has actually given a magisterial example of such research: "La Gnose valentinienne et les Oracles chaldaïques".¹³ It seems to me that a comparison of Gnostic and Chaldaean (and, more generally, middle-Platonic) demonology (i.e. also angelology) might be particularly fruitful. Belief in *daimones* is hardly characteristic of any single religious trend of Late Antiquity. What is more specific to the Chaldaean Oracles is the demonization of matter; A personified Hades is made Lord of hylic demons. This mythologization of cosmological principles, which does not recur in the writings of Platonic philosophers, is highly reminiscent of Gnostic thought-patterns, as Lewy remarks (377).

The parallels offered by Numenius of Apamea, one of the most interesting representatives of the growing spiritualist trend in second century Platonism (*fl. ca.* 150 C.E.), with the Chaladean Oracles are well-known, especially with regard to his distinction between the known demiurge and the unknown Primal Intellect (Fr. 17 D; 26L) and Chaldaean differentiation between the Father and the Second Intellect, "whom all you race of men call the First (Fr. 7, des Places).¹⁴ Lewy, followed by Dodds, gave priority to the

Oracles, while the opposite view has been held by such scholars as Waszink and Festugière.¹⁵ In the fragmentary state of our sources, this *crux* seems insolvable. Any convincing attempt to bypass it by arguing for a common influence on both authors, of some Gnostic trends for instance,¹⁶ must be very specific in order to go beyond mere characterization of the *Zeitgeist*.

I have tried to mention some of the questions raised by the Chaldaean Oracles and their Neoplatonic exegesis which are of special interest to the historian of religion. In a period of renewed intensity in Gnostic scholarship, the vastly improved new edition of Lewy's book not only sheds new light upon some obscure fragments, thereby revealing one of the most interesting religious trends of Late Antiquity. It also demonstrates that in order to be properly understood, these various trends must be studied together, as different facets of the same reality. *Chaldaean Oracles and Theurgy* shows that the phenomenon which Gilbert Murray has called the "failure of nerve" in Late Antiquity cannot be explained away as an optic illusion stemming from the literary preservation of the "croyances et...sentiments du vulgaire,"¹⁷ indeed, it was rather a malaise of intellectuals, among whom a Plotinus appears to be more an exception than the rule.

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* Hans Lewy, *Chaldaean Oracles and Theurgy: Mysticism, Magic and Platonism in the later Roman Empire*. Nouvelle édition par Michel Tardieu (Paris: Etudes Augustiniennes, 1978), XXVI + 734 pages. 350 FF.

¹ Hans Lewy Archives, Ms. Var. 376, Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem.

² *HTR* 54 (1961), 263-273.

³ Such defects are not characteristic of Lewy's other works; see e.g., his rather clearly written dissertation: *Sobria ebrietas: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der antiken Mystik* (Beihefte zur ZNW, 9; Giessen, 1929).

⁴ The last edition (and translation) of the fragments is that of Edouard des Places, *Oracles Chaldaïques, avec un choix de commentaires anciens* (Collection des Universités de France, "Budé"; Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1971).

⁵ See Julian, *Epist.* 12; cf. *Orat.* IV, 146A. Also: J. Bidez, *La vie de l'Empereur Julien* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1930), 272.

⁶ *The Middle Platonists, 80 BC to AD 220* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1977), 392-396.

⁷ For equivalents of *theourgia* (such as *hierourgia*, *mystagogia*, *theosophia*, etc.) see Des Places, ed., Jamblique, *Les Mystères d'Égypte*, (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1956), 45 n. 2.

⁸ See P. Boyancé, "Théurgie et téléstique néoplatoniciennes", *RHR* 147 (1955), 189-209.

⁹ See esp. Hadot, "Bilan et perspectives sur les *Oracles Chaldaïques*", *Chald. Or.*, 718-719 and C. Zintzen, "Die Wertung von Mystik und Magie in der neuplatonischen Philosophie", *Rheinisches Museum* 108 (1965), 71-100.

¹⁰ On the links between Proclus and the Dionysian Corpus, see H. D. Saffrey, "Nouveaux liens objectifs entre le Pseudo-Denys et Proclus", *RSPT* 63 (1979), 3-16.

¹¹ "Mysticism and Transcendence in later Neoplatonism", *Hermes* 92 (1964), 220.

¹² For instance by M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, II (München: Beck, 1974³), 480, or A.D. Nock, in the preface to his edition of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, I (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1946), VII.

¹³ In B. Layton, ed., *The Rediscovery of Gnosticism*, I (Supplements to *Numen*, 41; Leiden: Brill, 1980), 194-235.

¹⁴ On Numenius and his relations with Gnostic thought, see especially H. C. Puech, "Numénios d'Apamée et les théologies orientales au second siècle", *Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'histoire orientales et slaves*, t. II (*Mélanges J. Bidez*; Bruxelles 1934), 745-778; now conveniently reprinted in the first volume of Puech's collected Gnostic studies: *En Quête de la Gnose, I, La Gnose et le Temps* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978), 25-54.

¹⁵ For references, see des Places's edition, 11, nn. 1,2.

¹⁶ See Dillon, *The Middle-Platonists*, 364.

¹⁷ A. J. Festugière, *Les Moines d'Orient*, I (Paris: Cerf, 1961), 20-21. Peter Brown has emphasized the "Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity" (*Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1972), 80-101; cf. esp. 92, see also, *The Making of Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass., London: Harvard University Press, 1978). His favourite examples are usually the Syrian Stylites or the Egyptian monks. One may also reflect on the transformation of the philosopher into a theurgist, i.e. a holy man (see fr. 98, 137, 153 in the ed. of des Places, and his notes *ibid.*).

CONFUCIUS AND CHRIST

(*Review article*)

R. J. Z. WERBLOWSKY

When Li Ma-t'ou (Fr. Matteo Ricci S. J.) succeeded, in 1583, where St. Francis Xavier had failed, namely establishing himself in China, a new chapter was opened in the history of East-West relations — at least as far as the Western perception of Chinese culture and religion was concerned. For although missionaries and papal envoys had gone, or been sent, to “Cathay” (one of the better known being Friar John of Montecorvino, sent by Pope Nicolas IV in 1289), and in spite of regular trade and the existence of Franciscan and other houses, no reliable, let alone expert, information had filtered through. (On this subject see N. Cameron, *Barbarians and Mandarins*, 1970). Perhaps this was due to the fact that Western imagination was still in the thrall of the myth of Prester John or, more probably, because such contacts as existed were mainly with the Mongols, i.e., the court of the “Great Khan” and the foreigners to be found at it rather than with the Chinese proper. Already Yule had commented on Marco Polo’s “singular omissions” when it came to China and Chinese culture: “in no respect is his book so defective as in regard to Chinese manners and peculiarities”.

Ricci, as a Catholic man of religion, quickly adopted the garb and outward behaviour of what seemed to him the next best Chinese equivalent: that of a Buddhist bonze. He progressed rapidly enough in his understanding of Chinese culture and social realities to discover that in doing so the Christian missionary had identified with a socially inferior and despised group. He quickly changed garb, behaviour and the range of his personal connections, and adapted his way of life to that of the Confucian literati — the dominant status group. Fr. Ricci S. J. had become, to all intents and purposes, a mandarin. (In fact, he also wrote a Chinese style which by the most exacting literati standards was accepted as classic). This choice was not only one of “Jesuit” expediency but

also of intellectual and spiritual conviction. Buddhism, as a full-fledged counter-church, with its pantheon, its “masses for the dead” and cult, its hierarchy and priesthood, and its fully articulated belief-systems was a form of paganism incompatible with Christianity. Confucianism, on the other hand, was a civilised “civil religion”, disfigured no doubt by later superstitions and paganising accretions, but essentially as close to the Catholic notion of a *religio naturalis* as any actually functioning cultural system (as distinct from the figments of philosophers’ brains) could come. And what if Confucianists venerated ancestors and burned incense before their tablets? Ricci would have replied to a 20th century interlocutor: and what if Christians place flowers on the graves of their beloved as on a church altar?

This is not the occasion to go into the history of the “Rites Controversy” and the at times serious and thoughtful, at times petty and unedifying dispute about “accommodation”. By the time the various Jesuit *Relations* had reached Europe and been printed, reprinted and translated, the intellectual world possessed a relatively clear albeit controversial image of China (needless to say in terms of the information available to them plus their specific mentality — it would be foolish to judge them by the criteria of 20th century mentality and 20th century academic sinology). One of the greatest minds of the period, Leibniz, took a deep interest in the matter, for a variety of reasons of his own, and we are fortunate indeed to have (in addition to the already immense literature on 17th and 18th cent. *chinoiserie*) recently been presented with two complementary volumes on this subject.¹ The Rosemont-Cook annotated translation of the “Discourse on the Natural Theology of the Chinese” is a model of scholarship, historical perspective and philological *akribia*. Leibniz’s French text had been published before and even translated (into German). Rosemont-Cook, however, present not only the first English translation but in fact the best translation to date, serving moreover as an indispensable companion volume to any study of the text by virtue of the excellent introduction (pp. 1-50), the notes to the text, and the appendix giving the variant readings.

Leibniz had been in contact with the Jesuit China missionaries (especially Fr. Grimaldi) during his sojourn in Rome in 1689, and

he carried on a lively correspondence with some of them (especially Fr. Bouvet). His *Discourse* is an attempt to rehabilitate Ricci against the — from a Christian point of view — negative accounts of Confucianism given by Langobardi and Sainte-Marie (on the identity of the latter both books bring important clarifications), but it is also more than that. It is Leibniz's contribution to a grandiose "ecumenical" programme according to which the two highest civilisations (the two *politissimae gentes*: the one being Europe and the other the *orientalis quaedam Europa*) would reach out toward each other (*politissimae gentes eademque remotissimae sibi brachia porrigunt*)² — with Peter the Great's Russia possibly playing a geographically mediating role. Leibniz's vision was not merely one of intra-Christian ecumenicism but something on a culturally much wider scale. To this end Chinese culture (= Confucianism) had to be described a) as a civil religion and b) as a religion answering to the philosophical and theological requirements of an acceptable *religio naturalis* i.e., *in casu*, the philosophy of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. It had to be shown that "ancient" Confucianism (whether of the mythological or the historically classical age) was basically monotheistic, had a belief (of sorts) in souls etc., and that later Confucian expressions of atheism or materialism merely proved that the Confucians had forgotten some of their own venerable traditional truths. Confucianism is treated throughout (as the authors judiciously point out) as a pure type, and the traditional Chinese *san-chiao* syncretism and debates — a major issue in the Ming period, but not only then — are simply ignored. Three centuries after Leibniz, one of the founding fathers of modern academic sinology, J. J. M. de Groot, deliberately and almost aggressively insisted on speaking of "Taoist Confucianism" and "Confucianist Taoism" as interchangeable synonyms.

What Rosemont and Cook do in their introduction and footnotes is done more philosophically and systematically by Mungello. The author shows where Leibniz (viz. his informants) misdated texts, confused Neo-Confucianism (i.e. post-Sung) with ancient Confucian teachings, and made their wishes father of their interpretations. Mungello is especially at pains to show by detailed references to Leibniz's main philosophical works, to what extent the account given in the *Discourse* is geared to specific Leibnizian doctrines. One

cannot but agree with the view that Leibniz was *not* influenced by Chinese philosophy (*contra* Needham and others; it is unlikely also for chronological reasons) but that his exposure to the Chinese material, especially towards the end of his life, provided his ideas (including his binary mathematics) with confirmation and even a “boost”. Unlike Rosemont and Cook, Mungello not only emphasises the philosophical dimension but implies (though ever so faintly) also a contemporary and “relevant” theological perspective in “The Search for Accord”. Hence his interest extends to an analysis of the failure of the grandiose Leibnizian programme and to the question of a possible modern interpretation of Confucianism which (even after the Cultural Revolution) would enable contemporary Christians to pose the problem of “Accord for the Present”.

What Mungello only suggests by delicate hints is the explicit topic of Julia Ching’s study.³ The author is known to sinologists by her study of Wang Yang-Ming (Columbia University Press, 1976) — a book notable for its interest as well as for the number of misprints disfiguring almost every page. Since the author is a sinologist and not a latinist we should, perhaps, forgive the title of the introduction (p. xv) *Apologia pro libre* (sic!). The work does not pretend to be an historical or even phenomenological study (in spite of historical chapters sketching the first encounters, the Rites Controversy etc.)⁴ but is explicitly conceived as a contribution to contemporary ecumenical theology. The misleading statement (p. 6) to the effect that the Christian message is Jesus’ *teaching* (my italics) is fortunately counterbalanced on pp. 146-7 where the author makes it clear that Christianity is about the Person of Jesus as Christ and Saviour. (A professional historian of religion would say: not the teachings of Jesus but the Church’s teachings concerning Jesus). The theological thrust of the book is evident from the many references to e.g. Karl Rahner or Hans Küng. Max Weber is mentioned only once and polemically. A Catholic bias seems to be implicit in the exhortation to interpret Confucianism without the overtly militant or the covert (the author says “suppressed”) anti-clericalism present among many of the self-declared post-Christians today (p. 63). The culturally interesting point to be made in this connection is that anti-clericalism is a typical Roman Catholic phenomenon in the history of western secularism. Protestantism

may have invented modern secularism, but “anti-clericalism” (of the kind met with in France or Italy) was not one of its ingredients. On p. 130 a misquotation from Pascal shows no awareness that the dictum about God being a sphere whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference nowhere — an image also used by Leibniz — was already treated at length by Nicolas of Cusa (who, in turn, may have taken it from Hermetic texts; cf. Rosemont and Cook, p. 66 n. 27). Neither Julia Ching nor Rosemont and Cook seem to know of the one major (German) monograph on the subject (D. Mahnke, *Unendliche Sphäre und Allmittelpunkt*, 1937).

The dominance of the theological orientation over historical method comes out blatantly on p. 56 where the author, in her laudable irenic and ecumenical endeavour, blames the narrow-minded and chauvinistic (not her terms but mine) missionaries in the late 19th and early 20th centuries for the lowered prestige of Confucianism. Chauvinistic and narrow-minded most of these missionaries no doubt were, but the important thing for the historian of China (as distinct from the student of missionary psychology) is the decisive fact that the China of 1900 had — by any standards — reached an unprecedented nadir of corruption and decadence. The China of the last Manchu Empress was neither the China of (even late) Ming, let alone the China of the Kang Hsi Emperor. This, incidentally, may also explain why an anti-clerical, agnostic, lapsed Catholic like de Groot could dedicate one of his works “To All Missionaries of every Christian Creed Labouring in China”. For de Groot, in fact, Confucianism was the irredeemable villain of the piece. Whatever potential for genuine religion lay buried away under the thick cover of animistic supersition had to be sought in sectarianism (with its Taoist and Buddhist background), and it was there that the bearers of higher religion i.e., the Christian missionaries should plough their furrows. Gone are the days when even western scholars would chide and condemn sinology for its almost exclusive concern with the Confucian establishment due, no doubt, to its being unconsciously heir to the mandarin image imposed on China by the Jesuits.

The wheel seems to have turned. Prof. Ching’s conclusion is in the Ricci-Leibniz (-Mungello?) line: early Confucianism offers real similarities to Christianity. In fact, her ecumenical horizon would

not even discard Neo-Confucianism as a valid partner (p. 178), so much so that she argues in favour of Confucianism as a more helpful and promising partner to the Christian-in-dialogue than the currently more fashionable Zen Buddhism (p. 152). It should be added that in spite of its essentially theological character the book should be useful to Christians with an interest in Confucianism because of its attempt to bring out the “religious” and even “mystical” dimensions of the latter. How many self-appointed Zen-pundits in the West are aware of the Confucian practice (evidently influenced by Buddhism) of quiet sitting in meditation, *ching-tso*? (On this interesting subject see also Wm. Th. de Bary, *The Unfolding of Neo-Confucianism*, 1975, pp. 170ff.). For theologians who are not specialising in the study of Chinese culture, Prof. Ching’s book should help to redress the balance.

RJZW

¹ G. W. Leibniz, *Discourse on the Natural Theology of the Chinese* translated by Henry Rosemont Jr. and Daniel J. Cook. Monographs of the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy no. 4. The University Press of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1977, pp. 187.

David E. Mungello, *Leibniz and Confucianism, The Search for Accord*. The University Press of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1977, pp. 200.

² I have taken these Latin quotations from A. Hilckmann’s article “Leibniz und China”, *SAECULUM* vol. 18 (1967), pp. 317-321. The article does not figure in the bibliographies at the end of the books of Rosemont-Cook, Mungello and Julia Ching.

³ Julia Ching, *Confucianism and Christianity: A Comparative Study*. Kodansha International (Tokyo, New York and San Francisco), in co-operation with The Institute of Oriental Religions, Sophia University, Tokyo, 1977, pp. XXVI + 234, \$12.50 (¥2800).

⁴ It is curious that Prof. Ching, in her references to Leibniz, should mention the *Novissima Sinica* as well as the (as yet unpublished) few MS. pages *de cultu Confucii civili*, but say nothing about the major essay, written as his final and mature summing up shortly before his death, the *Discourse on the Natural Theology of the Chinese*.

BOOK REVIEWS

BRUNNER, HELLMUT, *Die südlichen Räume des Tempels von Luxor*, unter Mitarbeit von Johanna Dittmar, Lucie Lamy, Frank Teichmann und mit einem Abschnitt von Emma Brunner-Traut, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Abteilung Kairo, Archäologische Veröffentlichungen 18. — Mainz am Rhein, Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 96 p. DM 190.—.

Vor fünfzehn Jahren hat Hornung die Notwendigkeit für die Aegyptologie betont, "neben Medinet Habu endlich auch die übrigen grossen Tempel des Neuen Reiches zu veröffentlichen und damit der wissenschaftlichen Auswertung besser zugänglich zu machen", *ZDMG* 113 (1964), 638. Seitdem hat Professor Brunner sich mit seinen Mitarbeitern dem Luxor-Tempel (Zeit: Amenophis III.) zugewandt. Jetzt liegt ein einleitender Band vor, der sich mit der Gruppe der Räume XV-XXII beschäftigt.

Auf 209 sorgfältig hergestellten Tafeln werden die Reliefs und Inschriften, Spolien und antike Graffiti in Strichzeichnungen, bzw. in Fotos veröffentlicht. Im Text dieser Editio princeps findet man Beschreibungen, Abbildungen, Beobachtungen und Schlüsse; Frau Professor Brunner gibt dabei Stilproben. Die Darstellungen sind fast ausnahmslos dem Tempelritual entnommen worden.

In Kapitel VII äussert Brunner Gedanken zur Zweckbestimmung der Räume. Er erörtert besonders XVII, dessen Ausrichtung von Osten nach Westen und dessen Grösse abweichen von der entsprechenden Lage in allen anderen Tempeln des N.R. XVII war nicht nur Speisetischsaal für das Kultbild von XIX — so erklärt Verfasser dies —, sondern auch Raum der Sonnenbahn bei Tage. Hier wurde (zum ersten Mal?) ägyptische Tempelarchitektur der kosmisch-mythischen Bedeutung wegen umgestaltet.

Eine vorbildliche, auch für Religionshistoriker wichtige Herausgabe.

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LANCZKOWSKI, G., *Einführung in die Religionsphänomenologie* (Darmstadt, Wissenschaftl. Buchgesellschaft), 1978, vii + 152 p. DM. 25.50.

No matter how interminable, fruitful or fruitless, the methodological discussions around that difficult-to-define subject (method? discipline?) called the "phenomenology of religion", clearly no history of religions is possible without "phenomenological" concepts, categories and forms of description and analysis. Prof. Lanczkowski of Heidelberg has produced a brief introduction to the subject. The book (unlike the traditional German *Einleitungswissenschaft*-type publications) wants to be a small and unpretentious *Einführung*. Its purpose: to tell the interested layman and beginner what the phenomenology of religion is about (as a branch of the wider study of religions) and how to go on from this introduction to further study. The author briefly discusses, in historical perspective, the nature and problem of "comparing" religions, the history and character of the "phenomenology" of religion, and problems of method. He then proceeds to illustrate his theme by briefly dealing with a few selected topics: God and Gods; the "Sacred Order" (of the cosmos); types of religious authority (with the unintended result of showing how much phenomenology owes to sociology); Sacred Language and Sacred Scripture (on the latter subject the author had already published a volume several years ago); Cult; the notion of "History" and the general problem of a "Typology of Religion". Because of their brevity, the expositions of these topics are at times very sketchy and the choice of examples and typologies a little arbitrary. But the small volume should certainly fulfil its avowed purpose. In fact, advanced students and specialists will also derive much profit from many of the author's astute and illuminating observations.

RJZW

RUPP, ALFRED, *Religion, Phänomen und Geschichte*, Prolegomena zur Methodologie der Religionsgeschichte, — Forschungen zur Anthropologie und Religionsgeschichte Bd. 1 Saarbrücken, Homo et Religio Verlag der Forschungsgruppe für Anthropologie und Religionsgeschichte Prof. Dr. A. Rupp. 1978, 210 S. DM. 34.-.

Mit vorliegender Broschüre eröffnet der Autor, Professor für Religionsgeschichte des Alten Orients an der Universität Saarbrücken (Saarland, BRD) eine von ihm herausgegebene Reihe seiner Forschungsgruppe. Sie hat programmatischen Charakter und verdient daher entsprechende Aufmerksamkeit in unserer Zeitschrift. Verf. bestimmt seinen Grundansatz

selbst im Vorwort als einen "religionsgeschichtlich-anthropologischen"; außerdem komme es ihm auf die "Auseinandersetzung mit christlicher Theologie" an. Dieser originelle ode kuriose (je nachdem) Versuch einer Synthese von Religionswissenschaft (Rw) und (naturwissenschaftlicher bzw. medizinischer) Anthropologie ist durch den Studiengang des Verf. bestimmt und drückt sich auch in der Widmung der Schrift an den Theologen Adolf Köberle, den Anatomen Rudolf Bachmann, den Philosophen Arnold Gehlen und den Antropologen Gerhard Heberer aus.

Das in Rotaprint-Offset hergestellte Buch behandelt in 11 Kapitein alte und neue Probleme der Rw eben unter dem "religionsanthropologischen" Gesichtspunkt, d.h. durch den Versuch einer "Verbindung von *religionsphänomenologischer* und *religionsgeschichtlicher Sicht* vor dem Hintergrunde umgreifenden *anthropologischen* Grundverständnisses" (15). Die Religionsforschung wird als eine Disziplin *sui generis* verstanden (11), die Bezeichnung "Religionsgeschichte" hat gegenüber Rw und "Religiologie" den Vorzug (15f). Ihre Methode kann sie nur durch Arbeit am Material gewinnen; sie ist nicht Selbstzweck, sondern heuristisches, für Korrekturen offenes Mittel (14f, 108f). "Wichtige Arbeitsvoraussetzung" für den Religionsforscher ist, daß er von seiner "eigenen religiösen praktischen Grunderfahrung herkommt, wie sie im Sinne der anthropologischen Grundgegebenheiten unentrinnbar gegeben ist" (17, d.h. eine Umschreibung für ein religiöses *a priori*; vgl. auch 126ff). Da bisher keine befriedigende Religionsdefinition vorliegt (Kap. 3), sondern nur einseitige, meist vom Christentum geprägte Umschreibungen (21ff), gibt R. eine neue, die er als "heuristische Umschreibung" bezeichnet (31): "Religion ist Anerkennung und Gestaltung transzendenter Norm, ihre Verwirklichung und Effektivität in personaler Existenz und von ihr abgeleiteter Erwartungen" (zur Kritik s.u.). Bei der "Diskussion der Methodologie" (Kap. 4), die R. nicht eingehend behandeln möchte, da er nur Prolegomena bringen (33) und dem gegenwärtigen Überdruß an methodologischen Diskussionen Rechnung tragen will (34), kommt es ihm vor allem auf Folgendes an: die Religionsforschung darf sich nicht von ihren Hilfsdisziplinen beherrschen lassen (36), sie muß sich von Philosophie und Theologie abgrenzen (36f), die "Religionsphänomenologie" i.S. van der Leeuws ist aufzugeben (R. schließt sich weitgehend der Kritik Th. P. van Baarens an, 42-44, und nimmt auch Anliegen Pettazzonis, der Phänomenologie und Geschichte stärker verklammern wollte, auf, 46); der Strukturalismus ist nur bedingt in der Rw anwendbar (48f). Als Gegenrezept schlägt Verf. die Erarbeitung eines umgreifenden Konzepts mit ganzheitlicher Betrachtungsweise vor (50-53). Die Quellenproblematik (Kap. 5) wird sehr kurz und anhand der verschiedenen "Gestaltungen religiöser Vorstellungen" erörtert (54-

67). "Religionsdokumentation" und "Feldforschung" (einschließlich praktischer Hinweise!) werden im Abschnitt "Teildisziplinen der Religionsgeschichte" (Kap. 6) abgehandelt. Zu diesen gehören nach R.: die "Religionssystematik" (ein Ausdruck, der nur eine Verlegenheitsbezeichnung für eine nichtgeschichtliche Betrachtungsweise ist, 90); die Religionsphilosophie (aber nur als Objekt der Religionsforschung, nicht als selbständige Disziplin oder Teildisziplin, denn die R.w. darf weder system- und normentwerfend sein, noch sich ihre Prämissen von Philosophie oder Ideologie diktieren lassen, 94ff); die Religionsanthropologie (97ff, deren Programm umrissen, aber nicht recht deutlich wird, s.u.); die Religionsphänomenologie wird nur als Sonderfall der Religionsanthropologie verstanden (101), obwohl sie "den entsprechenden Schlüssel zu dem Ziel der Religionsforschung, die religiösen Gegebenheiten in ihrer Lebendigkeit zu erfasse, d.h. in ihrer konkreten, geschichtlichen Tatsächlichkeit" (104) besitzt; die Religionsgeschichte ist "der Ort, an welchem die Bemühungen aller Teilergebnisse ihr Ziel erreichen" (105), sie ist nicht Geschichtswissenschaft im üblichen Sinn, da sie mit besonderen Teildisziplinen verbunden ist und ihr Thema sei: "die normative gestaltungswirksamen religiösen Gegebenheiten und das Sein des Menschen als sich im Horizonte der Zeit verwirklichende personale Existenz" (106), daher muß sie in alle Bereiche menschlicher Existenz vordringen (107); schließlich die Religionsmethodologie (108ff). Als "religionsspezifische Teildisziplinen" im e.S. erkennt Verf. nur folgende sechs an: Religionsmethodologie, -systematik, -anthropologie, -phänomenologie, -geschichte (110f). "Hilfsdisziplinen" (besser wäre Ergänzungsdisziplinen) der Religionsgeschichte (Kap. 7) sind Philologie, Ethnologie, Soziologie, Anthropologie, Urgeschichte, Archäologie, Kunstgeschichte, Musik, Medizin einschl. der Psychologie (!) und andere "auf die Umwelt bezogene Disziplinen" (wie Astronomie, Geologie, Klimatologie, Botanik, Zoologie, 122). "Die eigentlichen religionsspezifischen Fragen beginnen immer erst jenseits der Hilfsdisziplinen" (117). R. bemängelt in diesen Zusammenhang die "teilweise niveaulose, wenn nicht schon wertlose Publikationspraktik" (ebd.), ohne praktische Beispiele zu geben, ein Verfahren, das wenig seriös ist und vergißt, daß man selbst im Glashaus sitzt. Die Auseinandersetzung mit der Theologie bringt nicht viel Neues (Kap. 8, 123-146): Religionsinterne Ziele und theologische Fragestellungen gehen die Religionsforschung nichts an, höchstens als Objekte ihrer Arbeit. Die Religionsgeschichte kann zwar Hilfsdisziplin der Theologie sein, aber umgekehrt kann letztere für erstere nur Forschungsgegenstand sein (146). "Elementare Einheit und das umgreifende Ganze" ist Kap. 9 überschrieben (147-169), in dem etwas mehr Licht auf das Programm von R. fällt. Grundsatz ist,

daß die Religionsforschung die "religiösen Gegebenheiten" nicht in außerdisziplinäre Gesichtspunkte und Methoden hineinzwängen darf (147). Eine religiöse Gegebenheit umfaßt mindestens drei Glieder: die transzendente Norm, den Menschen und einen weiteren Gegenstand (z.B. ein Kultbild, 155). "Elementare Einheit" nennt R. diejenige, "welche hinsichtlich der Zahl der Glieder als kleinste, noch religionsspezifische Einheit gelten kann" (156). Das "Religionsspezifische" — ein häufig von R. verwendeter Ausdruck — ist dabei ausschlaggebend an eine transzendente Norm gebunden; sie macht eine "Gegebenheit" zu einer religiösen (158f). Ihre Lebendigkeit — nur von ihr ist für R. ernsthaft die Rede — wird durch das Personsein bestimmt und dient der Selbstverwirklichung (158ff). Die Rolle der Tradition wird dabei in der bemerkenswerten Feststellung ausgedrückt, daß der Mensch, "um als religiöse Gegebenheit qualifiziert zu sein", in einem "religionsspezifischen Zusammenhang stehen muß" (159, was dem o.g. religiösen *a priori* gewissermaßen widerspricht und der nachfolgenden Aussage, daß ein "unaussprechlicher Zwang" für den Menschen bestehe, transzendenten Normen folgen zu müssen, 175). Daß die Religionsgeschichte einerseits von der Situation der Zeit beeinflusst ist und andererseits ein Beitrag zur Analyse der Zeit sein kann, wird in Kap. 10 festgestellt (170ff), eine Einsicht, die sich natürlich schon aus dem Geschichtscharakter von Religionen ergibt und nicht neu ist. Am Schluß (Kap. 11) wird noch einmal eine kurze Zusammenfassung des Gebotenen gegeben (176-179). Ein differenziertes Register (180-204) und eine recht lückenhafte Bibliographie (205-210) beschließen das Buch.

Der Eindruck, den die Lektüre hinterläßt, ist zwiespältig, nicht nur wegen des Versuches recht disparate Disziplinen zusammenzubiegen, sondern auch weil gewisse Grundprobleme der Rw nicht klar und konsequent durchdacht worden sind. So wird wiederholt davon gesprochen, daß die Religionsforschung die Religion "in ihrer konkreten Lebendigkeit" zu erfassen habe (18, 102, 104, 147, 177, 178). Wie soll das möglich sein, wo doch Wissenschaft den Lebenszusammenhang eben unterbricht durch den Schnitt der Betrachtung von außen, ganz abgesehen davon, daß für die vergangenen Religionen solche Erfassung überhaupt nicht möglich ist. Die Beschwörung der "empirischen Untersuchung" (176f) der "konkret religiösen Gegebenheiten" ist also entweder nur rhetorisch oder ungeschützt vorgetragen (von den daraus folgenden ideologiekritischen Implikationen ist natürlich dann auch nirgend die Rede; vgl. dazu meinen Aufsatz in *Numen* XXV, 1978, 17-39). W. Heisenbergs "Unschärferelation" lehrt, daß auch für die Naturwissenschaft keine direkte Erfassung des lebendigen Zusammenhangs möglich ist. Verf. schwebt offenbar auch für

die *Rw* der Idealtyp des ethnologischen Feldforschers vor. Damit wird die *Rw* jedoch erheblich beschnitten und der historischen Dimension beraubt. Letzteres ist nun überhaupt eines der auffälligsten Seiten des Buches: zwar wird der t.t. Religionsgeschichte bevorzugt (gegenüber *Rw*), aber der wirkliche historische Charakter dieser Disziplin wird nicht genügend in den Blick genommen. Weder wird die geschichtswissenschaftliche Grundlagendiskussion herangezogen oder überhaupt erwähnt (kein derartiger Artikel findet sich in der Bibliographie) noch gehört die Geschichte zu den Hilfsdisziplinen. Nur, und dies zeigt die einseitige Ausrichtung, Ur- und Frühgeschichte, Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte (120) werden aufgeführt. Der Grund dafür liegt in der von R. als Klammer aller "religions-spezifischen Disziplinen" betrachteten recht chimärischen "Religions-anthropologie" (in die auch die Religionspsychologie einbezogen wird), die als Grundwissenschaft das "Phänomen" der Religion offenbar als "anthropologische Grundgegebenheit" festzustellen und der die Religionsgeschichte zu dienen hat (vgl. bes. S. 99). Man könnte fast vermuten, daß bei R. die alte *theologia naturalis* unter diesem Konzept wieder auftritt. Die Auseinandersetzung mit der Theologie, die R. ja führt, wäre dann nur e.A. Scheingefecht. Ich halte jedenfalls die Einbeziehung der (medizinischen) Anthropologie in das Gefüge der *Rw* für gefährlich, ja abwegig, da damit ihr Charakter ebenso verändert wird als wenn die Religionsphilosophie aufgenommen wird. Religion ist schließlich keine medizinisch-anthropologische Tatsache! Die von R. beschworenen "anthropologischen Grundgegebenheiten", die "stets gleichbleibende Daten" (!) darstellen und ihrer Verwirklichung harren (99), sind höchstens Voraussetzungen, die aber keinesfalls begründen können, daß die Anthropologie zur entscheidenden Hilfsdisziplin der *Rw* werden muß — es sei denn man verwandelt sie in Religionsphilosophie oder theologische Metaphysik.

Der unhistorische Standpunkt kommt bei R. auch schon dadurch zum Ausdruck, daß er fast ausschließlich den Singular "Religion" verwendet und sich nicht darüber klar ist, daß historisch betrachtet nur "Religionen", Kultformen, Glaubensweisen usw. existieren (S.178 wird von der Religion als "geschichtliche Gegebenheit" gesprochen!). Das von R. angegebene Thema der Religionsgeschichte (106 s.o.) ist nun wirklich nicht dazu angetan, hier Klarheit zu gewinnen; man fühlt sich in religionsphilosophisch-theologische "Entwürfe" versetzt (die S.95 bestritten werden). Wenn Religionsgeschichte zum Ziel der Religionsforschung erklärt wird (105 unt.), fragt man sich, was soll am Start stehen — die Religionsanthropologie? Für die *Rw* ist aber die Religionsgeschichte der Start und die Basis ihrer Arbeit! Man versteht jetzt auch, warum R. den

(angeblichen) "Absolutismus der Philologie" (62, 118) nicht mag; die "philologische Methode" ist aber, wie schon H. Usener sehr richtig feststellte, diejenige, der unter allen historischen Methoden "eine in sich selbst ruhende Sicherheit" zukommt (*Kleine Schriften*, S.32). Wer den philologisch-historischen Charakter der Religionsgeschichte bzw. Rw. bestreitet, oder durch andere, eben anthropologische Betrachtungsweisen ersetzen möchte, löst sie von ihrer grundlegenden Basis und setzt sie den Strömungen von Metaphysik und Spekulation aus. Schon die Definition von Religion, die R. vorträgt (31, s.o.) ist ein Schritt in diese Richtung; sie ist historisch nicht verwendbar und eine reine religionsphilosophisch-theologische Aussage. Was soll "transzendente Norm" besagen, die sich in "personaler Existenz" verwirklicht? Als ob Religion eine bloß individuelle Angelegenheit ist; der Gemeinschafts- und Traditionscharakter von Religion wird gar nicht in den Blick genommen (nur 159 klingt derartiges an). Das "subjektive Betroffensein im Horizont transzendenter Norm" (129) ist eine von der Existentialphilosophie und -theologie übernommene Beschreibung, die den subjektiv-individualistischen Charakter der "Religionsforschung" von R. zum Ausdruck bringt und völlig dem "anthropologischen" Ansatz entspricht.

Ich gebe zu, daß hier grundlegende Differenzen zur Sprache kommen die nicht einmal alle thematisiert worden sind und außerdem durch die von R. geübte Darstellungsweise (bis in die Formulierungen hinein) noch erschwert und nicht gemindert werden. Ob Anwendung und Durchführung dieser "Prolegomena zur Methodologie" ein anderes Urteil erlauben, wird abzuwarten sein. Das Programm, wie es jetzt vorliegt, halte ich für die Rw für nicht akzeptabel.

Lehrstuhl Religionsgeschichte
der Karl-Marx-Universität Leipzig

KURT RUDOLPH

SMITH, JANE I. (ed.), *The Precious Pearl (Al-Durra Al-Fakhira): A Translation from the Arabic*, Studies in World Religions 1, Scholars Press (P.O.Box 5207), Missoula, Montana 59806, U.S.A., 1979, 120 p.

It has almost become a traditional academic activity to publish single works of Ghazali, or parts of the *Ihya*, in translation and with notes for the benefit of students and other readers who are no *arabisants*. To the already respectable number of such items a new one has been added. "The Precious Pearl" attributed to Al-Ghazzali, or perhaps really his work (Prof. Jane Smith inclines to accept the authenticity of the authorship) and dealing with the eschatology of the soul (future life, judgment day) has so

far not been available in English translation. Prof. Jane Smith of Harvard has filled this lacuna by producing such a translation (based on Gautier's Arabic text and French translation) enhanced by exact references to the Quranic verses quoted or referred to, helpful annotations, bibliographical references and an index.

The publication of this volume is also a welcome occasion to draw attention to a new and interesting publication venture. The Centre for the Study of World Religions at Harvard University has decided on publishing a series "Studies in World Religions" (of which the present volume is no. 1) under the general editorship of Prof. Jane Smith. Other studies and translations are scheduled to follow before long. The series will be handled and distributed by Scholars Press.

RJZW

Mysteria Mithrae, Atti del Seminario Internazionale su "La specificità storico-religiosa dei Misteri di Mithra, con particolare riferimento alle fonti documentarie di Roma e Ostia" Roma e Ostia 28-31 Marzo 1978/ Proceedings of the International Seminar on the "Religio-Historical Character of Roman Mithraism, with particular Reference to Roman and Ostian Sources" Rome and Ostia 28-31 March 1978, pubblicati a cura di/ Edited by Ugo Bianchi, Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain publiées par M. J. Vermaseren 80 — Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1979, XXVII + 1005 p. f 240.—.

The meeting in question was announced to our readers in volume XXV, 93. After the prolegomena, the seminar dealt with Roman and Ostian topography, inscriptions, graffiti and mithraea, and with three aspects of the mysteries. A general discussion was leading up to a conclusion on the religio-historical nature of Roman Mithraism. This final statement is found in four languages on p. XIV-XVIII.

Following the epilegomena, the volume offers a photographic appendix and two articles on two mithraea in Rome. Four extensive indexes conclude the book. Its early appearance beats a record!

2252 HJ Voorschoten (Holland),
Kon. Emmalaan 12

M. HEERMA VAN VOSS

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OBITUARY

Edward Conze (1904-1979)

Born in London and educated in Germany (Cologne, Berlin, Bonn and Hamburg) Conze became after 1933, when he began to teach and publish in England, one of the most prominent Buddhologists in the English-speaking world. By that time England possessed a remarkable tradition of Pali and Theravada studies, but it was Conze who injected into academic consciousness a better knowledge and profounder awareness of the Mahayana tradition. In this respect he ranks, with Giuseppe Tucci, among the foremost European scholars. His *Buddhism: its essence and development* (1951; translations in many other languages) is still one of the best general introductions of the subject to students as well as to the general public. *Buddhist Thought in India* (1962) was a major contribution to our understanding of the intellectual origins of Mahayana. A first-rate philologist, and familiar with Pali, Sanskrit and the Tibetan sources, he produced some seminal and classic editions and translations of texts, and established himself as the undisputed authority, among other things, on the Prajnaparamita Literature. In fact, Conze's last gift, before his death, to scholarship was a second, revised and enlarged edition (1978) of his *The Prajnaparamita Literature*. The book, first published in 1958 but out of print since 1972, has now been beautifully re-issued by the Reiyukai Library and Research Institute in Tokyo. Conze's background in Western philosophy enabled him to place Buddhist ideas—by comparing and contrasting—in a context that made them meaningful to Western students. His caustic and at times pugnacious style may have irritated some of his critics, and although he never gained the academic honours which he so obviously merited, the influence of his scholarship and writings will be felt for a long time to come. Fortunately, for those who knew him, his autobiography has recently been published. It is the account of a stormy and extremely productive life, and it makes compulsive reading.

RJZW

CHRONICLE

The second half of 1979 and the first half of 1980 were marked by unabated conference and congress activity, and probably many more took place than were brought to the attention of NUMEN. Italy seems to have been a favourite venue.

The Intern. Assoc. for the Study of Prehistoric and Ethnologic Religions (IASPER) held its third Symposium during 28 July — 2 August 1979, as usual at the Valcamonica Centre in Capo di Ponte. This time the theme was “The intellectual expressions of prehistoric man”, and the papers presented ranged — in addition to archaeological reports — over practically all the unsolved problems of prehistoric religion, including rock art (and its supposedly magic functions), funerary rites (inhumation and cremation) etc.

CISR (Conférence Internationale de Sociologie Religieuse) held its 15th Conference on the theme “Religion and Politics” in the lovely setting of the Fondazione Cini in Venice, 26-31 August, 1979. The Second Conference on Methodology of the IAHR took place in Warsaw, 11-14 September, 1979, and was probably the first international meeting of this kind in Eastern Europe, providing an opportunity for eastern and western scholars to meet and exchange ideas. The IAHR is grateful to the organisers of the conference, the Polish member-group and the Polish Academy of Sciences, for their efforts and hospitality. From 20-22 September, 1979, the European Assoc. of Japanese Studies held its second conference, this time in Florence and on the theme “Tradition in Modern Japan”. As usual, there was a full and interesting section on Japanese religion. Also in September, the colloquium on “The Soteriology of the Oriental Cults in the Roman Empire”, sponsored by the Italian member-group and the IAHR, took place in Rome (24-28 Sept., 1979). The Proceedings of the colloquium will be published in the EPRO series. The British member-group (BAHR) held its annual conference and General Meeting from 21-23 September, 1979, at Oxford with “Religion and Social Experience” as the main theme.

The Dumbarton Oaks Center for pre-Columbian Studies has, for the past decade or so, held annual symposia on pre-hispanic art and iconography. Religion, inevitably, features largely in these discussions. The last meeting (12-14 October, 1979), chaired by Dr. Jacques Soustelle, took up the controversy regarding Aztec “cannibalism”. The majority

stuck to the traditional view of ritual cannibalism whilst a very vocal minority championed the more recent, though apparently unconvincing, theory to the effect that dietary needs (caused by demographic pressures and shortage in meat proteins in the Valley of Mexico) produced this phenomenon. The Proceedings will be published by the Dumbarton Oaks Centre.

Buddhist Studies bring together specialists for ever more specialised symposia, in addition to the great congresses; cf. the announcement of the 2nd Conference of the Intern. Assoc. of Buddhist Studies (IABS). The 3rd Conference of the IABS will be held at Winnipeg (Manitoba), Canada, in conjunction with the Congress of the IAHR. A short but intensive international symposium was held at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, on 9-10 November, 1979. As befits such an intensive and specialised conference, all the papers were circulated among the participants in good time before the meeting.

The French member-group (Société Ernest Renan) held, in addition to its regular meetings, a colloquium on 2 February, 1980. The theme "Les Religions en regard des unes des autres" reflects the modern preoccupation with the varieties of cultural perception which, in the study of the history of religions, means a renewed interest in the attitudes (whether theologically verbalised or not) of one religion towards the other as they encounter, or sometimes only hear of, one another.

The German member-group (DVRG) held its Annual Conference and Business Meeting from 16-19 March, 1980, in Bad Soden-Allendorf. The theme was "Ritual und Gesetz", and the papers and discussions touched on religions both ancient and modern, and highlighted a number of related questions (e.g., Law and Antinomianism, Liturgy and Law).

The study of religions is pursued also where no pretence is made of total freedom from ideological presuppositions. In the west, History of Religions and Comparative Religion have long been (and to a great extent still are) anchored, academically, in Divinity Schools and Faculties of Theology. The other side of the coin is the study of religions in institutions whose orientation and ideological dogma are marxist (e.g., in "institutes for scientific atheism"). In this respect the encounter of western scholars with colleagues from Poland and the USSR at the Warsaw Conference can be said to have helped both sides to broaden their awareness. It should, therefore, occasion no surprise that the Chinese Academy of Social Science in Beijing (Peking) not only has a Dept. of World Religious Studies and an Institute of World Religions, but that the latter also publishes an annual entitled *Shijie Zongjiao Yanjiu* ("Studies in World Religions"). The first issue (344 pp.) appeared in 1979, and still evinces a

greater interest in the study of atheism and in the demystification of religion than in religion proper (according to the criteria of western scholarship). Every “culture area”, so it seems, has its own ways and rhythm of groping towards its culture-specific balance between scholarship and ideology.

RJZW

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

THE XIVTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

August 17-21, 1980

A quinquennial Congress for scholars specializing in the historical and scientific study of religion and religions. The general theme of the Congress is: "Traditions in Contact and Change". For previous information one may consult *Numen XXVI* (1979), 127-128.

Plenary Session Addresses by:

Professor M. Eliade
Professor W. S. Karunaratne
Professor S. Momaday
Professor A. Schimmel
Professor W. C. Smith

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R. J. Z. Werblowsky (Secretary General), W. Klassen, Y.-h. Jan
(Co-chairmen, Congress Organizing Committee), D. Wiebe (Executive Director)

SCIENCE OF RELIGION

Abstracts and Index of Recent Articles

The Editorial Committee of the I.A.H.R. has decided to discontinue the "International Bibliography of the History of Religions", published for many years by the I.A.H.R., with the financial support of CIPSH. In order to continue to make a meaningful contribution in the bibliographical field, the Committee has consulted with the publishers of the journal SCIENCE OF RELIGION, Abstracts and Index of Recent Articles (before 1980: Science of Religion Bulletin). Since January 1976 this quarterly abstract-journal has been published as a joint venture by the Institute for the Study of Religion of the Free University, Amsterdam, and the Department of Theology and Religious Studies of the University of Leeds.

These consultations have resulted in the following agreement: From January 1980, the abstract-journal will be published under the auspices of the International Association for the History of Religions. The Editorial Committee of the I.A.H.R. will function as the Advisory Board of the journal. Financial support for the journal from UNESCO—applied for by the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies (CIPSH) on the recommendation of the I.A.H.R.—has been secured up to 1983.

The purpose of SCIENCE OF RELIGION Abstracts is to provide a key to the continuous stream of articles in the field of "science of religion". At present four volumes have been completed, covering over 2000 articles. Each volume of four issues is provided with an author index and a cumulative subject index. The abstracts are taken from English, French, German and Dutch periodicals, and from other languages to the extent that these can be made available in English. About 240 periodicals are scanned regularly. The abstracts cover science of religion in general, the main fields in the history of religion: Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, primal religions, religions of the Ancient Near East and Greco-Roman Antiquity, and also articles conceived in terms of a particular discipline such as anthropology or sociology of religion. Certain areas of study—e.g. the field of Biblical studies—are omitted which, though theoretically a part of the study of religions, are well provided elsewhere with an abstracting service. Nevertheless abstracts are provided in the case of articles which are of significance or interest to the wider study of religion. The average number of pages of each quarterly issue comes to 90 (1979), A-4 format.

Subscription rates are (1980):

the Netherlands Dfl. 32.—

other countries Dfl. 38.—

Subscriptions can be sent to:

Administration SCIENCE OF RELIGION,

The Institute for the Study of Religion,

Free University,

P.O. Box 7161,

1007 MC Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

EDITORS' PAGE

The year's major event for the IAHR was the quinquennial International Congress, held this time at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada, from August 17 to 21 (see Chronicle in this fascicle). *NUMEN* will not profit directly from the wealth of interesting and fascinating papers presented on that occasion since the hosts of the Congress, the Canadian Organising Committee, plan to bring out a volume of *Proceedings*. The Editors of *NUMEN* have nevertheless obtained permission to print the text of the first Plenary Lecture, delivered by Prof. J. M. Kitagawa on August 18, 1980.

Our previous issue (*NUMEN* XXVII, pp. 155ff.) reviewed some recent publications dealing with "new religions". Scholarly preoccupation with the Japanese "new religions" has contributed not a little to the relative neglect of analogous phenomena in China. *NUMEN* therefore publishes an account of a flourishing and still developing Chinese new cult. The article by Welch and Yü may perhaps be found to offer description rather than analytical interpretation, but one of its merits is precisely that what it describes is not only a new cult but the work and procedures of researchers "in action" as they try step-by-step to contact the group studied and to learn about its history, doctrines, organisation and religious life. Historians have by now come to add not only "modern history" but also "contemporary history" to their field of study. History of Religion, as a historical discipline, is happily doing the same.

NUMEN desires to be not only a periodical publishing learned articles, but also a forum of scholarly discussion. The Editors are therefore pleased that Prof. Wilfred C. Smith has responded with a rejoinder to the critical reflections offered by D. Wiebe in *NUMEN* XXVI (1979), pp. 234/49.

The Editors

HUMANISTIC AND THEOLOGICAL HISTORY OF
RELIGIONS WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO THE NORTH AMERICAN SCENE

JOSEPH M. KITAGAWA

Introduction

Any attempt to assess the development of the History of Religions during the past 100 years, especially in North America, cannot ignore the impact of two of the major international assemblies on the discipline, namely, the World's Parliament of Religions, held in Chicago in 1893, and the first Congress of the History of Religions, held in Paris in 1900. Both were sponsored and promoted not only by religious or scholarly interests but also by strong business interests as well.

The World's Parliament of Religions was held as a part of the Columbian Exposition, which marked the 400th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of America. Civic leaders of Chicago were determined to outdo two previous affairs—the Centennial Exposition of Philadelphia in 1876 which displayed Alexander Graham Bell's telephone, Thomas Edison's telegraph machine, the typewriter and the sewing machine, and the Paris Exhibition of 1889 which lured the curious multitudes to the newly built Eiffel Tower. Thus, side by side with the first gigantic Ferris wheel and other novelties, the Chicago Exposition sponsored an ambitious assembly of representatives of major religions of the world. It is interesting to note that the planners of the 1900 Paris exhibition, knowing the success of the Chicago Parliament seven years earlier, gave full support to the first Congress of the History of Religions although, as one participant observed wryly, other events—especially a feminist congress and one on postage stamps—aroused more interests than did the scholarly gathering of the historians of religions.

The World's Parliament of Religions

In a sense, the Parliament of World's Religions reflected the growing interest of Americans in exotic non-Western religions, an

interest which may be illustrated by the fact that Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia*, first published in England in 1879, immediately went into 80 editions in America.¹ In 1890 the American Society of Comparative Religion was organized by Frank Field Ellingwood, author of *Oriental Religions and Christianity*. In 1891 Harvard University appointed George Foot Moore to the chair of History of Religions, while in 1892 the newly created University of Chicago established the Department of Comparative Religion and appointed George Stephen Goodspeed. Also in 1892 "The American Lectures on the History of Religions" was established jointly by Columbia, Cornell, Johns Hopkins, Pennsylvania, Yale and other universities. Significantly, many professors from leading universities were involved in the Parliament as representatives of their respective denominations. To be sure, many of them were scholars of Comparative Religion or History of Religions, but they were inclined—theologically and religiously—to share the motto of the Parliament: "To unite all Religion against all irreligion; to make the Golden Rule the basis of this union; to present to the world ... the substantial unity of many religions in the good deeds of the Religious Life ... and [to demonstrate] the marvelous Religious progress of the Nineteenth century..."²

As might be expected, the presence of Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist representatives in exotic attires, coupled with eloquent discourse of their religious tenets—exemplified by the activities of Swāmī Vivekānanda—impressed many participants. Moreover, in the minds of many Americans the cause of the Parliament (which was rhapsodically endorsed by Max Müller among others as a unique and unprecedented event), became inseparably related to the aim of Comparative Religion or History of Religions. What interested the supporters of the Parliament was not the critical, scholarly inquiry concerning religions, but rather the religious or philosophical basis for the unity of all religions. This motivation has brought about some salutary practical consequences. For example, in 1894 Mrs. Caroline E. Haskell, "recognizing the great interest aroused by the Parliament of Religions," established the Haskell Lectureship on Comparative Religion at the University of Chicago. She also established another endowment for lectures to be given primarily in India in which "the great questions of the truths of

Christianity, its harmonies with the truths of other religions... should be presented' and which were to be given in honor of John Henry Barrows, the guiding light of the Parliament. The impact of the Parliament was such that in 1897 the American Oriental Society formed a section for the historical study of religions. The Parliament also stimulated the churches: in 1899 Union Theological Seminary in New York instituted a chair for the philosophy and history of religions, and in 1904 the conference of the Foreign Mission Boards of the Christian Churches in the United States and Canada recommended that theological schools of all denominations provide for missionary candidates courses of instruction in Comparative Religion and the History of Religions.³

Elsewhere I have touched upon the checkered career of the comparative and historical study of religions in North America, its popularity throughout the 1910's and 1920's, its uneasy alliance with theological liberalism and certain types of philosophy of religion, and its sudden decline in the 1930's accelerated by the impact of neo-orthodox theology, the Depression, and the impending war.⁴ Through it all, a serious "humanistic" study of religions, especially the History of Religions, did not take root in North America until after World War II. Exceptions to this were the archeological and linguistic studies of ancient and classical religions and simplistic studies of the so-called "Oriental philosophies." Moreover, such disciplined studies as Indology, Buddhology, Islamics and Sinology, which might have informed and nurtured the "humanistic" History of Religions, were not well established before the war. On the other hand, the ghost of the Parliament of Religions—with its liberal and relativistic temper—continued to survive among the remnants of those who were theologically or religiously motivated in their study of non-Western religions: Hendrik Kraemer, for example, articulated a certain "theological" History of Religions. However, he did not find many followers, most likely due to his exclusivistic Christian stance. After the war the Parliament was forgotten by many except as an insignificant dot in recent history. However, its spirit is not altogether lost among those who are engaged in Comparative Theologies, Theology of Religions, or the "theological" History of Religions. These studies now depend on a wide variety of theological, philosophical,

psychological and anthropological resources. Ironically, today there seems to be a kind of confusion in certain quarters: the fundamental distinction between the two genuine enterprises, i.e. "humanistic" and "theological" approaches to the History of Religions, is not adequately appreciated. This confusion impoverishes both approaches, as I will discuss presently.

The Exhibition and the Congress

As we turn our attention to the first Congress of the History of Religions, which was held in connection with the Paris exhibition of 1900, I am reminded of Mr. Irving Kristol's statement that "the 19th century came to its end a little later than the calendar prescribed. It was not the organized festivities of 1900 but rather the organized hostilities of 1914 that decisively concluded a chapter in human history,"⁵ which was followed by the period of "interregnum" that lasted until World War II. Both the exhibition, often characterized as the "cathedral of commerce," and the discipline of the History of Religions were the products of the 19th century. Whether we like it or not, the 19th century was a time when the West dominated the entire world politically, economically, and even culturally. A series of large-scale exhibits and fairs were held in various parts of Europe. These fairs, starting with the 1851 exhibition at the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, London, which was spearheaded by the prince consort of mighty Queen Victoria, symbolized the technological, industrial, artistic and commercial achievements of the West-European nations. In hindsight we can see that in spite of the disastrous Franco-German War there yet remained some semblance of the unity of European community during the 19th century.

I do not have to say much to this learned audience about the intellectual development in 19th century Europe. Even in my college days in Japan, I was awed by the achievements of Hegel, Nietzsche, Comte, Darwin, Schelling, Dilthey, Schleiermacher, Bergson, and the Grimm brothers. The enormous intellectual vitality, born of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, resulted in the development of a series of academic disciplines, both natural and humanistic, during the 19th century. Also, Europeans came to know a great deal about the languages, customs, and religions of non-Western

peoples through the accounts of travellers, businessmen, Christian missionaries and colonial officials. Even the hitherto unfamiliar sacred scriptures of Eastern religions began to be translated into European languages. The enormous data thus collected were devoured by scholars of languages, ethnology, arts, history, philosophy, and religions, all of whom were then eager to broaden their intellectual horizons as well as to solidify their disciplines. It is not surprising, therefore, that É. Burnouf predicted in 1870: "This present century will not come to an end without having seen the establishment of a unified science whose elements are still dispersed, a science which the preceding centuries did not have, which is not even yet defined, and which, perhaps for the first time, will be named science of religions."⁶ And, as if to follow his prediction, some European historians of religions had a conference in 1897 in Stockholm,⁷ although it was in Paris in 1900 that the first full-scale Congress for the History of Religions, so recognized, was convened.

The 1900 Congress for the History of Religions

Undoubtedly the 1900 Paris Congress set the tone in various ways for subsequent Congresses, and, indirectly, the later development of four aspects of the discipline of the History of Religions. First, unlike the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions, the Paris Congress was a scholarly, and not a religious, conference. Its roster included prominent scholars of various areas and disciplines that were relevant to the inquiry into diverse religious phenomena. Notable among these scholars were Bertholet, Durkheim, Foucher, Maspero, Oldenberg, C. P. Tiele, E. B. Tylor, and van Gennep. There also were some clerics in attendance, for example, Nathan Söderblom, who was then a pastor in Paris, but they participated in the Congress as scholars. The name of Swāmī Vivekānanda, one of the leading stars of the 1893 Parliament, is listed in the minutes, but there is no record that he took any active part in the Congress. A curious question, however, was why did Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy of Christian Science fame appear at the Congress? She was not typical of the general academic tone of the meeting. Second, there were a variety of scholarly approaches and competencies represented at the Paris Congress. Indeed, there were many scholars who

were not “Historians of Religions” in terms of academic and disciplinary affiliations. Most of them, however, were engaged in critical, humanistic or social scientific investigation and research into the rich phenomena of religions, including those of precivilized and civilized, ancient and modern, peoples. Their primary purpose was the search for an “understanding” of the nature of religions. It was this “unified concern” which brought together biblical scholars, ethnologists, linguists, historians, philosophers, classicists, and “Orientalists” including Arabists, Indologists, and Buddhologists. In short, the Paris Congress was not simply an umbrella for these different scholars and disciplines; it assumed—rightly or wrongly—that these scholars representing different competencies and approaches were indeed engaged in the common broadly conceived enterprise of the “History of Religions.”

Third, in spite of the “unified concern” with a strong historical bent, the format of the Paris Congress was more “horizontal” in nature. By this I mean that it divided its program into eight sessions—(1) Religions of non-civilized peoples and of the pre-Columbian Americans, (2) Religions of the Far East, (3) Ancient Egyptian Religion, (4) Assyrian, Babylonian, Judaic and Islamic—that is, Semitic—religions, (5) Indo-Iranian religions, (6) Greco-Roman religions, (7) Nordic, Teutonic, Celtic and Slavonic religions, and (8) Christianity. Inevitably, the historical concern was dealt with primarily within each designated area; only incidental and occasional references to cross-area historical phenomena were forthcoming. Even with its “horizontal” concern, the program conceivably could have been devised with a slightly different format. For example, it might have addressed such fascinating topics as the historical interactions among Iranian, Jewish, Hellenistic, and Christian religious traditions shortly before and after the beginning of the Common Era, or the interactions of Jewish, Christian, and Islamic traditions around the Mediterranean world during the middle ages, or perhaps the religious convergence along the Indian Ocean. But, ironically, the format of the Paris Congress was followed without much deviation by the subsequent Congresses for the History of Religions. Only in the seventh Congress, held in Amsterdam, was there added a section on the

Phenomenology of Religion, and in the eighth Congress, held in Rome, another section on Psychology of Religion was recognized. Also, it must be mentioned that since Amsterdam in 1950, where the IAHR was officially formed, general topics, such as the "Mythical-Ritual Pattern" (Amsterdam), the "Sacred Kingship" (Rome) and "Origins and Eschatology" (Marburg), have been chosen by each Congress. These topics still were pursued by horizontally divided sessions.

Fourth, the Paris Congress did little, if anything, to move from the "unified concern" of the History of Religions to a "unified discipline," as envisioned by Burnouf and others. Nor was any serious effort attempted to articulate the nature of the discipline of the History of Religions until the 1950 Amsterdam Congress.

Discussions on the Nature of the History of Religions

Significantly, at every Congress since 1950 the leaders of the IAHR have urged historians of religions to be self-conscious about the nature, objective, and methods of the discipline. For example, in Amsterdam Professor van der Leeuw stressed on one hand the independence of the History of Religions from theology, and on the other hand the necessity of the History of Religions to maintain rapport with philosophy, archaeology, anthropology, ethnology, psychology and sociology in order to attain a "synthetic view." In this connection, it is interesting to note that as late as 1955 at the Congress in Rome, Professor E. O. James candidly acknowledged that the History of Religions has not as yet been firmly established as an independent discipline in Britain, even though there were a number of scholars who were interested in, and specialized in, adjacent fields. By 1955 the members of the IAHR were concerned with the relationship between the phenomenological study of religions, which was ably championed by Professor C. J. Bleeker, and historical studies of religions, advocated by Professor Raffaele Pettazzoni and others. Pettazzoni criticized the phenomenological study of religions for not being attentive to the historical development of religious events. At Rome, Professor Herbert Schneider also stressed that "*religious phenomena are essentially historical, and that the historical study of religion is central to all humanistic studies.*"⁸

Serious discussions on the nature of the discipline of the History of Religions have continued. In the 1960 Congress at Marburg a proposal to change the nomenclature of the organization from "International Association for the History of Religions" to "International Association for the Science of Religion" was rejected in favor of retaining the former, chiefly on the ground that the "science of religion" includes Philosophy of Religion, which is not a part of the History of Religions.⁹ Also at Marburg a number of participants signed a statement that stressed the following four points: (1) Although the *religionswissenschaftliche* method undoubtedly is a Western creation, it would be misleading to juxtapose "occidental" and "oriental" methods in the History of Religions, whose aim is "a better understanding of the variety and historic individuality of religions, whilst remaining constantly alert to the possibility of scientifically legitimate generalizations concerning the nature and function of religion." (2) *Religionswissenschaft* "understands itself as a branch of the Humanities." It studies the religious phenomenon as a creation of human culture. As such the awareness of the numinous or the experience of transcendence are understood to be empirical facts of human existence and history—to be studied, as are all human facts, by the appropriate methods. Thus, while the value systems of various religions present empirical phenomena and, therefore, are legitimate objects of our studies, "the discussion of the absolute value of religion is excluded by definition, although it may have its legitimate place in...completely independent disciplines such as theology and philosophy of religion." (3) Likewise, the notion that "the value of religious phenomena can be understood only if we keep in mind that religion is ultimately a realization of a transcendent truth" is not a legitimate foundation of *Religionswissenschaft*. (4) "The study of religions need not seek for justification outside itself," for every quest of historical truth is "its own *raison d'être*."¹⁰

Then, in 1965, when the Congress met for the first time in North America (that is, at Claremont, California), there were two presentations that touched on the relation of our discipline to the nature of religion or religions. First, in the opening address Professor Bleeker stressed the two elements of our discipline, namely, "history" and "religion." "We are historians," he said: "This means that

whether we study the dead religions of the past or the living religions...the approach will be the same, i.e., the historical one.” On the other hand, our subject matter, namely, religious phenomena, refer to the “supernatural, the transcendental, the Holy.” Quoting his teacher W. B. Kristensen, Bleeker suggested that the task of the historian of religions must be “to understand the faith of the believers.” Obviously, the “faith of the believers” might be approached from various perspectives and with different objectives. Professor Bleeker himself is of the opinion that, unlike scholars of theology or the philosophy of religion, the historian of religions must deal with religion as a human phenomenon. Accordingly, he asks a central question: “where the core and kernal of religion is to be situated?”¹¹

The second presentation I refer to was made by Professor Wilfred Cantwell Smith, who began his address with a critique of his assigned topic, “Traditional Religions and Modern Culture.” While Professor Smith does not need anyone to interpret his well known views on the nature of Comparative Religion, let me recount—almost arbitrarily—a few of his points which are relevant to our present discussion. (i) Smith shifted the focus from “a religion and its plural” to “religion” as such, which he understood in terms of “faith.” And, because “faith” is by nature “timeless” and “present,” religion has “linked each succeeding present moment to eternity.”¹² He insisted, therefore, that the subject matter of our study “is not merely tradition but faith, not merely the overt manifestations of man’s religious life, but that life itself.”¹³ (ii) According to his scholarly agenda, the historical study of religion should serve primarily to illumine “what is happening in our day to the quality of life that those traditions used to represent and foster.”¹⁴ He wrote that his task, therefore, was “to discover and report how far and wherein these inherited symbols are today performing their earlier functions as one part of one side of the complex dialectic between man’s spirit and his material environment.”¹⁵ (iii) With his preoccupation with contemporary forms, Smith pointed to various types of religiousness of contemporary man. One such type is the religiousness “without phenomena” reminiscent of Dag Hammarskjöld’s view. Another is a phenomenon-less religion, or the “religionless faith” of Bonhöffer.

Both of these positions have their counterparts in other parts of the world. (iv) In order to do justice to the religiousness of contemporary man, Smith rejected the type of scholarship that “would give priority to discipline over subject matter, and would exclude from consideration all facets of a problem that do not neatly fit one’s extant techniques.” Instead, he called for a “new venture” in religious scholarship. For him this endeavor includes, for instance, “phenomenology of religion but will pass well beyond it,” because “man’s religiousness always transcends phenomena.” Moreover, Smith was persuaded that such a “new venture” in Comparative Religion, which aims at the study of man in his religious diversity “is coming into being, perhaps especially on this continent,” (meaning North America) even though he acknowledged that its accomplishments are as yet incipient and its methods groping.¹⁶

I hope my admittedly spotty summary of Professor Smith’s presentation has not unduly distorted his main thesis, which has relevance to my own assessment of what is happening in our discipline in North America. Before going into that subject, however, let me refer briefly to the opening address given by Professor Geo Widengren at the 1970 Congress in Stockholm. In sharp contrast to Smith’s view presented at Claremont, Widengren reiterated the importance of the historical character of the History of Religions that has been the hallmark of all the Congresses from 1900 onwards. While he acknowledged the importance of the Phenomenology of Religion and published a learned volume on the subject, he viewed the overwhelming domination of phenomenology with some misgivings. He worried about its implication to methodology, especially on two grounds. First, the Phenomenology of Religion takes its material from the History of Religions. Thus, he asked, “is it possible to understand the phenomenology of religion, and especially the phenomena of a given religion, without knowing its history?” Second, it is history that informs our understanding of contemporary religious phenomena. In his own words: “although we may think we could base our research exclusively on the *modern* history of the great religions, how would it be possible to understand the problems of modern times without the historical perspective? And on the other hand what would a phenomenological study...be like, if the ancient religions

were left out of consideration.”¹⁷ Thus, Widengren lamented the anti-historical ethos of our time with its growing hostility against all historical research and historical interpretation of facts. In his opinion, the anti-historical trait may also account for the loss of prestige of the disciplines of the History of Religions. Again, in his words: “It is as though the subject itself had lost its good name, its reputation, in some quarters—especially in Germany.”¹⁸

Widengren also was alarmed by the excessive “compartmentalization of scholarship” and its implication to the common enterprise of the History of Religions. He readily understood why specialists in Classics, philology, and specific religious traditions are involved in their own respective learned societies; but he was distressed by the fact that even the historian of religions, working in the field of—let us say—Islamic, “feels more interested in what is going on in this field than in the vast domains of the History of Religions in general, where one is more or less lost, and is often exposed to the accusation of diletтанism if one should try to keep in touch with what is going on outside one’s own field.”¹⁹ Widengren was unhappy about the myopia of specialists who think they can study specific religions without any reference to the general history of religions. In fact, he felt, it is the general history of religions, which requires the cooperation of all specialists, which in turn provides proper perspective to the study of specific religions. Thus, while “voices have been heard claiming that Islam [for instance] is singularly ill-suited to be associated with studies in our field,” he states, “there should be more Islamic studies oriented from the viewpoint of the History of Religions in general....”²⁰

Even such brief accounts of the discussions at various Congresses on the nature of the History of Religions may serve as a reminder that this is by no means a closed issue and that wherever we may be situated, and whatever our competencies may be, all of us must make every effort to clarify the nature of our discipline for the sake of our common task. With this in mind, let me present my own assessment of the state of the History of Religions in North America, and my own understanding of the nature of our discipline. I am particularly concerned with the ambiguous relationship between the “humanistic” and the “theological” approaches to the History of Religions.

The History of Religions in North America

Earlier I mentioned that Comparative Religions and the History of Religions became popular subjects in North America following the Parliament of Religions and during the first three decades of our century. They suddenly declined due, to such factors, among others, as the impact of theological neo-Orthodoxy, the Depression and the impending war. The mood of the 1930's and early 40's was such that a serious quest for the unity of religions, which was the main theme of the Parliament and which was pursued, for example, by the Harvard Philosopher, William Ernest Hocking,²¹ did not attract many followers. Similarly, erudite lectures on the History of Religions sponsored by American Council of Learned Societies did not arouse much public interest.

The impetus for the renewed interest in the History of Religions—or at least certain aspects of it—after the end of World War II came from several quarters: (i) a sudden interest in things Eastern, including historic Asian religions and modern Eastern cults; (ii) the proliferation of Religion Departments in colleges and universities that pursue the non-theological nature of the History of Religions as well as general studies of non-Western religions; (iii) the growing fascination among some social scientists in non-Western myths, symbols, cults, social structures and cultural patterns, and (iv) a new interest among influential theologians in dialogue not only with Judaism but also with Eastern religions.

(i) Much has been written regarding the penetration of Oriental art, literature, cuisine, martial arts, meditation, and Eastern religions into Europe and North America. As far as Canada and the United States are concerned, the newly aroused interest in Asia resulted in the establishment of many programs in Asian Studies in academic institutions. This is reflected by the phenomenal growth of the Association of Asian Studies. Such programs on Asian Studies, which until recently enjoyed foundation and government subsidies, often appointed historians of religions to their faculty. While there are some obvious benefits in such appointments, I share Professor W. C. Smith's anxiety that the historian of religions in this situation might easily become just one more Asian expert, whose contribution will be confined to the explication of the role of

religions only as one factor (alongside economic, political and other factors in Asian societies and cultures).²²

(ii) Undoubtedly, the establishment of Religion—or Religious Studies—Departments in universities and colleges potentially is one of the most salutary developments in the history of education in North America. However, partly because this has been such a recent venture, there is not sufficient clarity as to what is meant by religious studies. In some cases, religious studies programs seem to be little more than watered down theological studies minus a faith commitment and staffed by those who have received traditional theological training but have been disenchanted by institutional religion. Or, in a few cases, the program is staffed by ministers, priests, and rabbis who have academic credentials but have little understanding about the academic study of religion(s). There are also some programs which are based on an assortment of unrelated courses, such as psychology of religion courses from the psychology department, medieval history courses from the history department, sociology of religion from the sociology department, etc. Therefore it is very difficult to make any general statements about religious studies programs at the moment.

At present, many institutions offer courses on “Western religious traditions,” “American religious studies,” or their variations such as “Catholicism, Protestantism, and Judaism,” “Black religious traditions,” and “The role of the feminine in religion.” Many of them also offer courses on psychology of religion, Bible, philosophy of religion, sociology of religion and primitive and/or non-Western religions. It has become a common practice for Religion Departments to offer a course in the History of Religions, partly because the non-theological character of the discipline is readily acceptable to the faculty of arts and sciences. But, almost invariably, an historian of religions is chosen not on the ground of his or her training in general history of religions but on the ground of his or her knowledge of a specific non-Western religion. The most amusing and extreme example is a case of a two-person department in which one person is expected to cover all “western” subjects, while the second person is responsible for everything “eastern.” Also, while many programs of religious studies are now looking for various organizing principles—such as “conceptual” (philosophy of reli-

gion, comparative doctrines or ethics, etc.), “historical” (history of ideas, history of doctrines, etc.), and “dialogical” (religion and psychology, religion and law, religion and literature)—they have not seriously looked at the History of Religions as one of the viable options.

(iii) The establishment of Religion Departments in colleges and universities has brought religion scholars, including historians of religions, close not only to scholars of the humanities but also to social scientists. The latter now show growing interests in religious data; but to be sure, their interest arises from the perspectives of social sciences. It might be worth recalling that throughout its development the History of Religions has had close rapport with psychology (especially depth psychology), sociology, and anthropology, as well as with theology and philosophy of religion. One noticeable trend in North America today is that many historians of religions have lost meaningful contacts with theologians and philosophers of religion, and are turning to social scientists as their primary “conversation partners.” Ironically, some of them have been so heavily influenced by the works of a Lévi-Strauss, a Turner, a Douglas, or a Geertz, that they pay little attention to historical research, which is, after all, the cornerstone of the History of Religions.

(iv) It is interesting to note that while many main-line churches in North America have lost much of their incentive for overseas missionary enterprise, they show increasing interest in “dialogues” with other religions. Numerous seminars, workshops, and conferences that have been held for this purpose, and to which a number of historians of religions have been invited, exhibit a wide range of qualities and perspectives. These range from simplistic exchanges of main tenets of various faiths, reminiscent of the 1893 Parliament, to more sophisticated searches for a common language or common frame of reference as a basis for a meaningful dialogue with other religions. In addition, some theologians here are now trying to develop the viable disciplines of “Theology of Religions,” “Comparative Theologies,” and “Theological History of Religions.” One of the most serious attempts in setting forth the principles of a “Theological History of Religions” was made by Paul Tillich. These theological efforts are beginning to create confusion

in the minds of some people, including some scholars, concerning the proper distinction and/or relation between the “humanistic” and “theological” approach to the History of Religions, as I will discuss presently.

History of Religions—“Theological” and “Humanistic”

I realize that to make a distinction between the “humanistic” and “theological” approaches to the History of Religions is easier in theory than in practice. After all, a historian of religions, like other human beings, has many facets. The same is true with a theologian. By “Theological History of Religion,” however, I do not mean theological reflections of a scholar whose academic commitment is toward the humanistic enterprise in dealing with the history of religions. Admittedly, this distinction is more difficult to make when a person has a double commitment—one to theological and the other to humanistic enterprises. This, indeed was the case for a number of the forerunners of our discipline, Nathan Söderblom, and Friedlich Heiler, for example. When one has such a double commitment, one has to train himself or herself to be a “disciplined schizophrenic,” as it were, so that one has to make clear whether one is making a theological or humanistic statement. Equally difficult to establish is the difference between theological and philosophical perspectives. This is true especially in Asia, whose scholars—such as Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and many others—have not made a sharp distinction between the two. Nevertheless, in Asia the distinction between philosophical/theological on one hand and humanistic/scientific approaches on the other is clearly recognized. When, in the early 1930’s, D. T. Suzuki said, “Formerly Buddhists were glad to welcome a scientific approach to their religion. But nowadays...instead of relying on scientific arguments for the rationalization of the Buddhist experience they are...trying to resort to its own dialectics,”²³ he was saying that Buddhists were now self-consciously committed to a philosophical, not a humanistic/scientific, enterprise in dealing with their religion. Such a stance is analogous to the Western “Theological History of Religions.” What is confusing in North America today is that some scholars mix theological and humanistic assumptions, procedures of study, and conclusions.

Paul Tillich made it clear that he was engaged in a theological enterprise, even though he wanted to use data provided by the History of Religions. In his own words:

A theological history of religion should interpret theologically the material produced by the investigation and analysis of the pre-religious and religious life of mankind. It should elaborate the motives and types of religious expression, showing how they follow from the nature of the religious concern and therefore necessarily appear in all religions, including Christianity in so far as it is a religion. A theological history of religion also should point out demonic distortions and new tendencies in the religions of the world pointing to the Christian solution...that the New Being in Jesus as the Christ is the answer to the question asked implicitly by the religions of mankind.²⁴

Tillich was convinced of the importance of applying the phenomenological approach to basic concepts in theology, thus “forcing its critics first of all to see what the criticized concepts mean and also forcing itself to make careful description of its concepts and to use them with logical consistency....”²⁵ Furthermore, realizing that the phenomenological method is only partially competent in dealing with spiritual realities like religion, he advocated a “critical phenomenology”—the method which supplies a normative description of spiritual meaning—in theological enterprises.²⁶ He found this method used implicitly by Rudolf Otto, whom he knew well while teaching at Marburg.

The phenomenological description of the holy in Rudolph Otto’s classical book *The Idea of the Holy* demonstrates the interdependence of the meaning of the holy and the meaning of the divine, and it demonstrates their common dependence on the nature of ultimate concern. When Otto calls the experience of the holy “numinous,” he interprets the holy as the presence of the divine. When he points to the mysterious character of holiness, he indicates that the holy transcends the subject-object structure of reality. When he describes the mystery of the holy as *tremendum* and *fascinans*, he expresses the experience of “the ultimate” in the double sense of that which is abyss and that which is the ground of man’s being.²⁷

Tillich’s methodological procedure in his proposed “Theological History of Religion(s)” rested on what he called a “dynamic typology,” which he claimed to be more adequate than a one-directed dialectics *à la* Hegel.²⁸ Using the means of a dynamic typology, he wanted to characterize the typical structures within the unique form of various historic religions and to compare them with the typical structures appearing in Christianity as a historic

religion. Only when both Christian and other religions were “sub-
 jected to the criterion of final revelation”²⁹ was the final task of the
 Theological History of Religions possible. For example, “in the
 dialogue between Christianity and Buddhism two telos-formulae
 can be used: in Christianity the telos of *everyone* and everything
 united in the Kingdom of God; in Buddhism the telos of *everything*
 and everyone fulfilled in the Nirvana.” He further added that
 “These, of course, are abbreviations for an almost infinite number
 of presuppositions and consequences; but just for this reason they
 are useful for the beginning as well as for the end of a dialogue.”³⁰

My reference to Tillich does not imply that he was the only ad-
 vocate of a Theological History of Religion(s). There are many
 other serious attempts being made today along this line of inquiry.
 Although he has dealt with concrete data only in his small work,
Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions, I refer to Tillich
 because to me personally his assumptions and methodological prin-
 ciples are clearer than others. Since dialogues among Catholic, Pro-
 testant, and Jewish groups have been going on in North America,
 and since various religious groups are beginning to engage in
 dialogues with non-Western religious groups, a variety of theologi-
 cal approaches to the history of religions—regardless of different
 nomenclatures—will continue to be devised. Some North American
 historians of religions have already been involved in such dialogues.
 The present danger is that the line of demarcation between
 theological and humanistic approaches to the history of religions is
 not safeguarded—much to the disservice to both enterprises.

Inasmuch as my assessment of the North American scene is
 made from my limited perspective, I should state briefly what I
 understand the History of Religions to be, acknowledging of course
 that my own understanding is not the only, or perhaps the best,
 one. I have a sneaking suspicion that today in North America, and
 probably in other places too, the designation of the History of
 Religions refers to so many different enterprises that share no
 “unified concern” that this term is losing its own integrity. I do not
 want to restrict the term “History of Religions” to mean only the
 historical aspect of our study, leaving out the phenomenological
 and other legitimate dimensions of our discipline. I realize that

there are different emphases and approaches within our discipline. This is why I have been encouraged by discussions on the nature of the discipline that have been carried on at previous Congresses, and I certainly hope we compare notes and learn from each other on this subject at this Congress. My concern arises from my observation that today any study that touches on historical dimensions of any religion, usually non-Western religion, from any perspective and utilizing any methodological principle, is accepted as the History of Religions. I already have cited the "theological" History of Religions as a legitimate theological enterprise, but not to be confused with the "humanistic" History of Religions. I also have indicated that the popular equation of the History of Religions with the study of "World Religions" goes back to the Chicago Parliament of 1893. Regarding the use of the category of "World Religions" as such, which is used widely in academic circles in North America, I refer you to the insightful critique of my colleague, Jonathan Z. Smith, in his recent book entitled *Map is Not Territory*.³¹ Another broad category, "Asian Religions," which has been made an acceptable term by programs of Asian Studies, has now crept into the vocabulary of Religion Departments and of the American Academy of Religion. The popularity of this subject, however loosely interpreted, is illustrated by the recent survey that lists 1,653 professors who teach Asian religious traditions in colleges and universities in Canada and the United States.³² This list, however, does not indicate the disciplinary training and/or affiliation of these professors; we are not told who among all of these scholars are theologians, comparative ethicists, social scientists, philosophers of religions, or historians of religions.

I do not wish to suggest that the History of Religions is the most important discipline in the study of religions. However, I am persuaded that the History of Religions is a legitimate scholarly enterprise in spite of many problems involved, and that it is not merely a collective title for a number of related studies, such as the historical studies of Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, and primitive religions, for example, or the comparative studies of doctrines, practices, and ecclesiastical institutions of various religions. I interpret the History of Religions, following my mentor Joachim Wach, as an approximate—and not altogether satisfactory—English term

for *Allgemeine Religionswissenschaft*, which is an autonomous discipline situated between the normative studies, such as philosophy of religion and theology, on one hand, and descriptive studies such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, on the other. *Religionswissenschaft* is composed of two complementary aspects—the “historical” and the “systematic” procedures of study. The historical task requires a mutual interaction between the historical studies of specific religions and the study of general history of religions, while the systematic task aims at disciplined generalizations and structuring of data and depends on a collaboration of phenomenological, comparative, sociological, psychological, and other studies of religions.

Like other historians of religions, I affirm that the point of departure of *Religionswissenschaft* is the study of the historical forms of religions as humankind’s response to the sacred dimension of life and the world, recognizing that each religion is an individual totality, incomparable in its uniqueness. The goal of an historical study in *Religionswissenschaft* is to gain understanding into the various facets of each religion, facets that have together come to form the totality of the various religions, but which do not remain the same from one historic stage to the next, without losing their *Lebensgefühl*. In this endeavor, we must study a specific religion in its environment. Following Raffaele Pettazzoni’s advice, we also study “its relation to other cultural values belonging to the same environment, such as poetry, art, speculative thought, social structure and so on.”³³ It must also be mentioned that in this historical study of specific religions, a “humanistic” historian of religions—unlike a “theological” historian of religions or a philosopher of religion—does not have a speculative purpose, nor does he resort to an *a priori* deductive method. At the same time, while the historical task of *Religionswissenschaft* has to abide by descriptive principles, its inquiry must be directed to the “meaning”—which links, in a sense, the descriptive and normative concerns—of the religious data which constitute its subject-matter. In this respect, my learned colleague Professor Mircea Eliade reminds us that the meaning of a religious phenomenon can be understood only if it is understood to be something religious. “To try to grasp the essence of such a phenomenon by means of physiology, psychology, sociology,

economics, linguistics, art or any other study is false; it misses the one unique and irreducible element in it—the element of the sacred.”³⁴ It might also be mentioned that the comparative method is a necessary tool for the understanding of the nature and meaning of specific religions.

Of course, the historical study of specific religions within the framework of *Religionswissenschaft* has much in common with, say, histories of Hinduism, Buddhism, and other religious traditions. But the historical study within *Religionswissenschaft* must view specific religions not only as entities in themselves but also as parts of total history of religions of mankind. This is why at Stockholm in 1970 Professor Widengren suggested that we need more scholars who are oriented from the viewpoint of the History of Religions in general to study Islam and other religions. We realize, of course, that our audacious aim to gain an “integral understanding” of the general history of religions depends on our limited horizon to view the total religious history of mankind. Such a task—here the historical task borders the systematic task—requires a selectivity of data and a telescoping of the long and complex historical tapestry of various religions. In this respect, the task of the historian of religions is something analogous to that of the historian of cultures and civilizations; it involves “thinking about a civilization,” to use the phrase of Robert Redfield. According to Redfield, “thinking about” is “something different from getting information and acquaintance, though this third activity requires and is guided by the first two. It is to develop formed and namable thoughts about the civilization. It is to conceive it, and make it a mental artifact, a shaped work of the intellect.”³⁵ If such “thinking about” civilization involves some risks, then thinking about the religious history of the human race involves far greater risks and difficulties. And yet this is precisely what the historian of religions is expected to contribute to the humanistic study of religions.

I must humbly confess at this point that the longer I study the History of Religions the more difficulties I encounter in relating the historical and the systematic dimensions of *Religionswissenschaft*. I have almost come to a simple conclusion that some people are born to be more historically oriented, while others are systematically oriented. I also recognize the rarity of the kind of encyclopedic

mind that can develop adequate systematic works. And yet, I also am inclined to believe that in the long run *Religionswissenschaft* will stand or fall with the systematic structuring of the data on its own ground. Certainly, the task of *Religionswissenschaft* is not the gathering of data for the benefit of other academic enterprises. To be sure, philosophers and theologians are at liberty to utilize our research, but their interpretations must remain within the philosophical or theological discipline. Conversely, the exclusive utilization of philosophical or theological data by *Religionswissenschaft* turns ours into a philosophical or theological discipline. The common danger I find in our discipline is to fall into the temptation of systematizing our data on the basis of a framework borrowed from philosophical, sociological, anthropological or psychological models.

Our discipline is haunted by the difficulties in deriving systematic categories to focus and study. The forebears of our discipline seemed to have borrowed not only data but also categories from various other disciplines, especially from philosophy. Even C. P. Tiele, who rejected a metaphysically or religiously colored philosophy, resorted to philosophical categories because, in his view, *Religionswissenschaft* was essentially a philosophical inquiry into the universal human phenomena called religion.³⁶ According to Wach, it was Max Scheler who first envisioned an independent, religio-scientific mode of inquiry called the "concrete phenomenology of religious objects and acts," whose aim was to study religious phenomena by means of religio-scientific categories.³⁷ Nevertheless, the systematic or phenomenological inquiry of *Religionswissenschaft*, in spite of its use of religio-scientific categories, often has been mistaken by others as a philosophical or pseudo-theological endeavor. More recently, due to the strong influence of the social sciences on *Religionswissenschaft*, our discipline's systematic study appears to look, at least to some people, more like anthropology or psychology. These and other kinds of misunderstandings notwithstanding, the primary task of the systematic dimension of *Religionswissenschaft* is not so much to unfold novel generalizations as much as to articulate its research procedures and methods.

Rightly or wrongly, I feel that it is crucially important for historians of religions to begin their work with "classical" religions.

Our scholarly categories, inadequate though they may be, are derived primarily from the classical forms of religions in which religious manifestations are more clearly discernable than in the ambiguities of modern or less-known precivilized situations. Thus, unlike social scientific disciplines which have refined research procedures to deal with modern as well as primitive religious phenomena, the “humanistic” History of Religions must first develop sufficient understanding of classical forms and types of religious phenomena. These forms may then provide a means with which to deal with other religious modalities. In this connection, I would also add a word of caution against the uncritical use of the “traditional versus modern” formula, which often appears to our anti-historical contemporaries to offer simple resolutions for the complex problems presented by the discipline of the History of Religions. Such a stereotyped dichotomy, however, fails to do justice to the rich historical heritage or the tradition (*traditio*) which has remained alive and resourceful to the present. I am keenly aware of a series of difficult problems that confronts the History of Religions, methodological or otherwise. But, I believe, our problems will find their solutions—to the extent that any scholarly problems are ever solved—by our asking important religious-scientific questions and by our refining our research procedures and categories.

As you may recall, in the 1870’s Burnouf predicted the impending emergence of a unified science of religion. Again in the 1950’s Pettazzoni added an optimistic note to the effect that the division of *Religionswissenschaft* into historical and systematic (or phenomenological) dimensions represents “merely a stage on the road towards the foundation of a single science of religion on its essential bases and in its undivided form.”³⁸ Those of us who are wrestling with the task of bridging the two dimensions of our discipline, without too much success, may feel Burnouf and Pettazzoni were visionaries or dreamers. Even then, we can ill afford to lose such a lofty dream and vision—here in North America and elsewhere!

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¹ See Arthur E. Christy (ed.), *The Asian Legacy and American Life* (New York: John Day Co., 1942), p. 43.

² The World's Religious Congress, *General Programme* (preliminary ed., 1893), p. 19.

³ Louis Henry Jordan, *Comparative Religion: Its Genesis and Growth* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1905), p. 375.

⁴ Cf. "The History of Religions in America," in *The History of Religions: Essays in Methodology*, ed. by Mircea Eliade and J. M. Kitagawa (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1959), pp. 1-30.

⁵ Irving Kristol, "The 20th Century Began in 1945," *The New York Times Magazine* (May 2, 1965), p. 88.

⁶ É. Burnouf, *La Science des religions*, 3rd ed., 1970, p. 1.

⁷ See *ACTES of the 5th International Congress for the History of Religions* (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1930), p. 29.

⁸ *ATTI of the 8th International Congress for the History of Religions* (Florence: G. C. Sansoni, 1956), p. 44.

⁹ *X. International Congress for the History of Religions* (Marburg: N. G. Elwert Verlag, 1961), pp. 21-22.

¹⁰ Statement drafted by Professor R. J. Zwi Werblowsky, and signed by Professors Abel (Brussels), Brandon (Manchester), Brelich and Brezzi (Rome), Duschesne-Guillemain (Liege), Eliade, Kitagawa and Long (Chicago), Goodenough (Yale), Hidding (Leiden), Hoffman (München), Kishimoto (Tokyo), Lanternari and Pincherle (Rome), Simon (Strasbourg), and Zaehner (Oxford). This statement was presented in response to the statement circulated by Professor C. J. Bleeker.

¹¹ *Proceedings of the XIth International Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968), Vol. I, pp. 7-9.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 62.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

¹⁷ *Proceedings of the XIIth International Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975), p. 20.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

²¹ See his *Living Religions and A World Faith* (New York: Macmillan, 1940).

²² Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Non-Western Studies: The Religious Approach," *Report on an Invitational Conference on the Study of Religion in the State University* (New Haven: The Society for Religion in Higher Education, 1964), pp. 50-65.

²³ Quoted in A. Eustace Haydon (ed.), *Modern Trends in World-Religions* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1934), p. 38.

²⁴ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), vol. 1, p. 39.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 215-16.

²⁸ Paul Tillich, *Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), p. 56.

²⁹ Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, *op. cit.*, pp. 220-21.

³⁰ Tillich, *Christianity and the Encounter...*, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

³¹ Jonathan Z. Smith, *Map is Not Territory: Studies in the History of Religions* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978), pp. 295-97.

³² See *Professors in the United States and Canada Who Teach the Religious Traditions of Asia...* (Hamilton, N.Y.: Fund for the Study of Great Religions-Colgate University, June 1980).

³³ Raffaele Pettazzoni, *Essays on the History of Religions* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1954), p. 216.

³⁴ Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1958), p. xi.

³⁵ Robert Redfield, "Thinking about a Civilization," in Milton Singer (ed.), *Introducing India in Liberal Education* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 3.

³⁶ Joachim Wach, *Religionswissenschaft—Prolegomena zu ihrer wissenschaftstheoretischen Grundlegung* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1924), pp. 117-19.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 126-28.

³⁸ Pettazzoni, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

THE TRADITION OF INNOVATION:
A CHINESE NEW RELIGION

HOLMES WELCH and CHÜN-FANG YÜ

In June 1958 Holmes Welch became aware of the existence of a Chinese “new religion” when he was taken to its headquarters in the New Territories of Hong Kong. During the year that followed he visited its local branches, photographed its rites, acquired a copy of its basic scripture, and spent many hours questioning its leaders and followers. One of these was a young man, Huang Li-shan, who had married the daughter of its founder and now administered its affairs. Huang Li-shan was not his legal name, but a style he had chosen so as to be Alexander Huang in English. With him Welch had ten long interviews, the last of which took place in May 1959. Welch wanted to publish the material he had collected, but it bristled with problems. This was a syncretic religion that drew its ideas and terminology not only from Buddhism and Taoism, but also from the existing syncretic religious systems in which Chinese religious innovation has been so richly displayed. It seemed to Welch that he must learn more about all of them before he could write about one of them, but he did not have the time to do this. So for more than a decade the material he had collected lay in a file; and, to the best of his knowledge, nothing was published in Western literature about this new religion. In June 1978 Yü Chün-fang discovered its existence in Taiwan and shared her findings with Welch. They decided to publish what they had learned as soon as possible.*

Its name was and is “The Holy Teaching of Heaven’s Virtue” (T’ien-te Sheng-chiao). It was founded in 1899 by a four-year-old boy, resurrected from death after three days. First let us trace his career; summarize the cosmological and theological tenets on which he based it; describe the organization and rites of his church in 1958-59; then in 1976-78, by which time it had begun to flourish in Taiwan too; and finally offer some assessments.

The Founder

The Founder (*chiao-chu*) was Hsiao Ch'ang-ming, born January 3, 1895 in Le-chih, which lies about a third of the way between Chengtu and Chungking in west China. His parents were ordinary peasants, neither particularly rich nor poor and having no special religious commitment. The first four years of his life were normal. Then he died. As usual in the case of young children, his parents decided to give him a quick and simple burial, which took place three days later. When his coffin was about to be lowered into the grave, they opened the lid for a last look. To their amazement they saw him move. He got out of the coffin and walked home. This happened on June 20, 1899.

Once they were back in their farmhouse, he informed his parents that he had received Heaven's Mandate to come down and save mankind from suffering and misery. The gods had instructed him to found a new religion, the Tien-te Sheng-chiao, and to cure disease by the methods of essence, breath, and spirit (*ching, ch'i, shen*). His parents did not believe him and would not let him leave home to carry out his mission. After waiting in vain one or two years for them to change their minds, he slipped away and began to live in temples and in the houses of friends and converts. Though he was only five or six years old, he was able to heal the sick, to write poems, and tell extraordinary tales about the gods. More and more people became his disciples, convinced by his healing powers and by his superhuman knowledge. He could answer all questions, including those put to him by skeptics and scholars about philosophy, religion, the arts, and the beginning of the world. Some time after his eighth year he moved to Changsha in Hunan province, where he established the headquarters of his church. Gradually branches were set up in Hankow (for Hupeh province), in Nanchang (for Kiangsi province), and other cities. By 1923 he had more than a million followers. His religious commands were strictly obeyed by the hierarchy he established.

Although he is said to have been able to read and write as soon as he was resurrected, he received little or no formal education. Therefore he often had a hard time remembering Chinese characters; he would write the wrong ones or write the right ones in the

wrong way. But when he was inspired, it was different. Then he wrote in a fine hand with every character correct. In a moment or two, with perfect assurance, he could produce a couplet or poem.

The most important of his writings was "The Compass of Life" (*Jen-sheng chih-nan*), which he had composed as a boy and which was constantly being reprinted. (Welch's copy was printed in Shanghai in 1945; Yü's copy was printed in Taiwan in 1975). Its main theme was the practice of the twenty virtues that would avert the destruction of the world. At least seven other books, mostly of his sermons, were recorded and printed by his disciples.¹

Until he was in his late thirties, he shaved the front part of his scalp (like a Buddhist monk) and wound the long hair on the back part into a topknot (like a Taoist priest). Later he kept it all shaven. A photograph taken when he was young shows fine and regular features—an attractive face, strikingly vital, humorous on the left side and severe on the right.

In the spring of 1937, foreseeing the Japanese invasion, he moved his headquarters to Huang Shan in southern Anhwei, where he put up two buildings in a pine forest amidst some of the most beautiful mountain scenery in China. The building he lived in was called Hibiscus Lodge (*Fu-jung Chü*)—named after nearby Hibiscus Peak. It was large enough to house a thousand people during the prayer meetings that used to be held there. Nearby was the "Stone House" (*Shih-t'ou Fang*), also known as the "Green Shadows Retreat" (*Lü-yin Shen-ch'u*), where the Founder often went to do his meditation. He could stay in a trance for several days at a time.

It was during such a period of meditation that he died at the age of forty-eight. One day when the disciples, Huang Li-shan among them, came as usual to kneel before him in Hibiscus Lodge, he said that he wished to perform a little sleight-of-hand for them and asked them to leave the room. Since he had often done tricks for them before and had a good sense of humor, they went out thinking nothing about it. He did not call them back. The next day Huang Li-shan, who was frequently sent to speak with him on behalf of the other disciples because the Founder liked him (whereas they held the Founder in greater awe), was asked to go in and see what he was doing. It turned out that he was apparently meditating. Again on

the third day Huang went to look and again found him apparently meditating. Though this continued for several more days, it caused no surprise, since even a week of trance was not unusual for the Founder.

On the seventh day his wife went in to look at him. She saw that he was not in a normal lotus position, but sat on the bed with the right leg tucked under the left and the left stretched out straight before him. She felt for his breath and found none: he was dead. She discovered his will in the drawer of nearby table.² It bore no date. His disciples were in consternation. Some of them, including Huang, went outdoors and by chance looked at the sun. To their amazement they could see his face in it. (They were able to look at the sun because it was slightly covered by cloud.) They did not dare to move his body. For three days they prayed that he would return. Then they consulted the Radiant Cloth (the centerpiece of every altar) and learned from it that he would not return.³ At no time did his body become stiff with rigor mortis, and his face continued to have color. He was given a normal Chinese funeral (since he had never instituted other rites) and buried in a vaulted stone chamber, largely above ground and with an air duct, just as he had requested.⁴ The site too he had chosen—in a place where one could see mountains and water and where he had often walked with his wife, children, and followers.

On the day they escorted the coffin there, a very large number of disciples, including Huang, saw the Founder's face in the sun as before, but this time much more clearly. It happened when they were crossing a high rock over a pool, where his wife had often sat with him meditating. In her grief she decided to follow him in death—to leap off and drown herself. Suddenly she noticed that the sun was no longer hot. She looked up, saw him there nodding, and thus was given the courage not to leap, but to carry on as the spiritual leader of the religion.

The Founder's death took place on January 15, 1943 (the 10th of the twelfth lunar month), when he was, according to Chinese reckoning, forty-nine.⁵ By then his religion claimed two million followers. Six years later, when the Communists took China, the number is said to have risen to 3,670,000.

Cosmology and Pantheon

The supreme deity of the pantheon that he revealed to his followers is the Unborn Holy Mother (Wu-sheng Sheng-mu).⁶ It is she who brought the universe into being, including the two next highest divinities. One of the latter is Chün-t'ien Shang-ti (Supreme Lord Co-Equal with Heaven), who governs heaven and whose nature seems similar to that of the Christian God. Chün-t'ien Shang-ti created the particular part of the universe that we call Earth and, at the instant of its creation, threw into it from a golden platter 9,600,000,000 seeds that became men and animals.⁷ Those who lead good lives find their way back to heaven; the rest remain on earth or fall into hell. Earth is governed by the second of the two divinities. His name is I-ch'i (Unitary Breath),⁸ and he takes a special interest in the welfare of mankind.

Periodically the earth is destroyed. The name for each period is *chieh*—from the Sanskrit *kalpa*, a term introduced to China with Buddhism—and the name for its close is “the great catastrophe” (*hao-chieh*). Our own kalpa is divided into three periods: first the age of the legendary emperors (the three Huang and five Ti); second the Shang and Chou dynasties; and finally the present period, which started in the Han dynasty and will end when the world is destroyed by wind.⁹ Then a new kalpa will begin, and all good men will live in the world referred to by Confucius as the Great Harmony, by the Buddha as the World of Bliss, and by the Founder of this new religion as the Lotus World. There will be no eating, no sexual intercourse; no greed, hatred, or stupidity (the three evils of Buddhism); and no sexual love. All the bad people will be in hell, where they will forever remain.¹⁰

The periodic destruction of the earth takes place because men's wicked deeds finally wear out the patience of Chün-t'ien Shang-ti. To prevent this I-ch'i has repeatedly been incarnated and tried to teach men how to mend their ways. Among his thirty-six incarnations have been the legendary Chinese emperors, and, later on, Confucius, Lao-tzu, the historical Buddha, Jesus, and Muhammad. In this incarnative aspect I-ch'i is referred to as the Formless Ancient Buddha (Wu-hsing Ku-fo); and, although part of him has descended to earth each time, another part has remained above in

the Heaven of Incipient Mystery (Ch'i-hsüan T'ien). He was most recently incarnated as Hsiao Ch'ang-ming in 1899.

The reason for his last incarnation was a controversy in heaven.¹¹ Although the Unborn Holy Mother is at the top of the heavenly hierarchy, the actual administration rests in the hands of Chün-t'ien Shang-ti, who never descends into the world he created, but is well aware of everything that happens in it. In the 1890s his exasperation with human wickedness reached the breaking point: he decided to bring the kalpa—and the world—to an end. At once the gods (*shen-hsien*) began to hold a series of meetings at which they asked the Formless Ancient Buddha to go down to earth and try once more to “avert [the end of the kalpa] and save [mankind].”

The Formless Ancient Buddha protested that he would probably be unsuccessful. Five of his avatars had already failed (Confucius, Lao-tzu, the Buddha Sakymuni, Jesus, and Muhammad): their human followers had even ended up waging war on one another. But, after repeatedly refusing, he finally agreed to undertake the mission on the proviso that the other gods (except his superiors, the Holy Mother and Chün-t'ien Shang-ti) would obey his orders and give him any help that he asked for. All the gods agreed. They decided that the new religion he was to found should be called the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao—the Holy Teaching of Heaven's Virtue. The Formless Ancient Buddha said that he would use wisdom and healing in order to succeed where his previous avatars had failed.

When Chün-t'ien Shang-ti heard about this, he got very angry; he wanted to destroy the world then and there. However, the Formless Ancient Buddha came to see him in his palace, the Ling-hsiung Pao-tien, and brought all the gods with him to help him plead. Despite the hierarchical government in heaven, all the gods are, in a sense, equal (like the followers of the religion on earth). Therefore, when Chün-tien Shang-ti saw that so many of them had come, he agreed to postpone the end of the kalpa. However he said that if the Formless Ancient Buddha were unsuccessful this time, he would end it as he had planned—though he did not say when. All this was explained by the Founder after he rose from his coffin in 1899.

His resurrection—or rather, to be more accurate, incarnation—is referred to by his followers as *ch'eng-tao*, “achieving the

way,” the same term used by Chinese Buddhists for Sakyamuni’s enlightenment. (Actually, of course, the Ancient Formless Buddha has always had the Way: it was only his avatar, Hsiao Ch’ang-ming, who appeared to achieve it.) During his mission on earth the Founder did not indicate how far he had succeeded in postponing the end of the kalpa. He would only say that it was still due to come “soon.” Sometimes at Huang Shan, when he returned to consciousness after several days in trance, he would report that he had been up to heaven attending a conference on this very question.

Church Organization and Activities

Early in his career the Founder decided that his church should go under different names in different places.¹² He felt that to use just one name would make people realize how widespread it was and that this would attract ambitious individuals who wanted to use it in their struggle for power. A few such did try to use it, but without success: he himself once turned down an offer to serve in the government. Among the various names of local branches were:

1. The Philosophy-of-Religion Research Center (Tsong-chiao Che-hsüeh Yen-chiu She)¹³
2. The Center for Revering Virtue (Ch’ung-te She)¹⁴
3. The Center for the Goodness of the Great Harmony (Ta-t’ung Tz’u-shan She)
4. The Center for the Goodness [coming] from Transformation by Virtue (Te-hua Tz’u-shan She)

The third of these had a name similar to another new religion (the T’ung-shan She), founded in 1914.

The T’ien-te Sheng-chiao had an administrative hierarchy that included several levels. Each province was headed by a *chu-ch’ih*; each individual temple by a *cheng-ch’ing*.¹⁵ Followers were most numerous in Anhwei, Szechwan, Kiangsi, and Hopei, and in the cities of Shanghai, Hangchow, and Nanking.¹⁶ Besides the *chu-ch’ih* and *cheng-ch’ing*, there were local committees to represent the church in dealings with government; and attached to the temples there were *k’ai-tao shih* (“teachers who open the way”), licensed by the headquarters to teach.¹⁷

The internal organization of the church was based partly on lineage status (how many generations from the Founder¹⁸) and partly on a system of degrees of proficiency in religious practice. The Founder used to issue diplomas, but in 1959 this was no longer being done in Hong Kong. In fact, Welch could not get Huang to name a title that was conferred by any diploma—although in other syncretic religions the ladder of titles is well known.

Religious practice consists of “external work” and “internal work” (*wai, nei-kung*). The former refers to good deeds—deeds that are in accordance with the Twenty Words that summarize the ethical teachings of the Founder. These are loyalty (*chung*), forgiveness (*shu*), incorruptibility (*lien*), intelligence (*ming*), virtue (*te*), rectitude (*cheng*), justice (*i*), faith (*hsin*), patience (*jen*), fair-mindedness (*kung*), magnanimity (*po*), filial piety (*hsiao*), benevolence (*jen*), compassion (*tz’u*), awareness (*chüeh*), moderation (*chieh*), frugality (*chien*), truth (*chen*), propriety (*li*), and harmony (*ho*). The emblem of the religion is a heart surrounded by the Twenty Words written in a circle, all on a background of the sacred color, yellow.¹⁹ The basic liturgy consists in reciting the Twenty Words seven times: they are considered a mantra (*chen-yen*). When a person is initiated into the sect, he picks two of the Twenty Words as the virtues on which he will concentrate. That is, in these two respects he will try particularly hard to benefit others.

The term for initiation is “taking the Refuges” (*kuei-i*), which originally referred to taking refuge in the Three Jewels of Buddhism—the Buddha, the dharma, and the congregation of monks. This ceremony requires a couple of hours and is followed by weeks or months of external work (good deeds). Then another initiation is held, termed *tien-tso* (to dot—or start—the sitting, as one would bring life to a buddha image by dotting it between the eyes). The initiate learns how to meditate as taught by the Founder, either alone or in a group. In 1958-59 Huang did not talk much about this, but he did mention that illumination enters by the back of the head: this is termed “seeing the radiance” (*k’an-kuang*).

By meditating the devotee helps to increase the quantity of *yang* (male) breath in his or her body and to decrease the *yin* (female) breath. (This has long been a goal in Chinese popular thought.) After death he or she will be weighed by I-ch’i.²⁰ If the *yin* is found

to be predominant, one goes to hell. If the *yin* and *yang* are balanced, one is reborn on earth. If there is little *yin*, one goes to the antechamber of heaven, called the Formless (*Wu-hsing*). But if one has plentiful *yang* and almost no *yin*, one enters heaven directly. That is, one is reborn in the Lotus World, where one is instructed in the Tao and continues to perfect oneself.²¹ The Founder regarded man's nature as neither good nor bad: a human being is, at conception, natureless (*wu-hsing*). Already inside the womb, nature starts to be acquired—the prenatal nature (*hsien-sheng hsing*)—so that, if the mother is happy during pregnancy, the child will be happy after it is born (as some Western doctors now maintain). This prenatal education is called *t'ai-chiao*. But all who wish to make their conduct *truly* natural and spontaneous (*tzu-jan*) follow neither their prenatal nor postnatal nature: they follow naturelessness (which seems close to the Taoist conception of man's *original* nature).²² When Welch asked Huang about the purpose of life, he answered: "From the conditioned to cultivate the unconditioned" (*yu-yu hsiu-wu*). On another occasion he said that the ultimate purpose was to return to the Golden Platter (see p. 226). Even after rebirth in the Lotus World one still sought to return to the Golden Platter. There was a saying: "When cast forth, they overflow the six planes; when rolled up again, they are hidden in the secret (*ts'ang yü mi*)."²³ The six planes of existence were accepted by the Buddha in India; and by virtually all Buddhists today.

Aside from meditation (performed by adepts of the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao for four two-hour periods a day at 5:00 and 11:00, A.M. and P.M.), the internal work does not seem to involve any austerities. Everyone may marry; there is no celibate priesthood. Meat and other tabooed food and drink are only forbidden during periods of prayer.²³ Benefits from internal work include longevity, good health, and the ability to heal others. In 1958-59 Huang would only say of such healing that it involved the use of breath (*ch'i*) and the intervention of I-ch'i. The autobiographical preface states that the Founder's own methods excluded herbal and mineral medicines and worked by *chih-ch'eng kan-ying*, which might be translated as "perfectly sincere moral responsiveness." Welch himself saw healing performed by a local leader of the religion in Wanchai (a poor urban section in Hong Kong), who headed a tem-

ple there called the "Hall of the Hsiao Shih Buddha" (*Shih* means "master"). This local leader used not breath but "the method of Former Heaven" and had already treated ten thousand people, he said. His calling card included the phrase "healing by essence and spirit" (*ching-shen chih-liao*). Welch happened to meet him in the company of a European woman whose doctor had just made a painful incision to drain a staphylococcus infection. She asked the healer if he could help her. The smooth and smiling manner with which he had just assured her that he could cure anyone who trusted him was replaced by a liveliness that might have shown either amusement or nervousness. On being told that she *did* trust him, he rose to his feet, held his right hand forward in a gesture of blessing, kept his left hand at waist level, and turned his head down as if in concentration. After about five seconds he asked her if she was feeling better. She said she was, and he repeated the performance. Then she found that she was *really* feeling better. All shook hands, in congratulation. The lessening of pain lasted about an hour. Later Huang told Welch that this particular healer was unauthorized and had simply appropriated the name of the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao for his own use.²⁴

Healing is an important part of the "internal work" that leads to rebirth in the Lotus World. Another common form of internal work is participation in prayer meetings. These were conducted in Hong Kong on the first and fifteenth of every lunar month and on the birthdays of Confucius, Lao-tzu, the Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad, and the Founder. There were also special meetings to pray for world peace, held once a year in accordance with the Founder's instructions. They ran in twelve-year cycles, the first of which began in 1945, two years after the Founder died. Lasting 81 to 128 days between the second and sixth lunar months, their purpose was to avert the end of the kalpa.

There was also a rite termed "salvation of the dead" (*ch'ao-yu*), which Welch had an opportunity to observe in 1959. It was very much like a "release of burning mouths" (*fang yen-k'ou*) as performed by Chinese Buddhist monks, to whom *ch'ao-yu* would be a term entirely comprehensible (meaning "to save from the darkness of death"). Here the officiants were laymen dressed up as Buddhist monks *cap-a-pie*. Paper money²⁵ and ingots were burned to assist or-

phaned souls and placate vengeful ghosts (*li-kuei*), the ghosts of persons who had died unjustly or before their time. (Vengeful ghosts can cause illness by separating the soul from the body; but good ghosts can heal by rejoining them.) Therefore at the start of the ceremony the king of hell—the Serene, Limitless, Royal Buddha²⁶—was asked to permit all vengeful ghosts to come to the shrine so that the officiants could preach to them and urge them to cease doing harm and instead do good; thus they might escape from their vicious circle of misery and be reborn in the Lotus World. At Huang Shan the salvation of the dead had been held only on the first and fifteenth of the lunar month (during the annual prayer meeting), but in Hong Kong it was held every Sunday. This was partly because the Second World War had left behind so many troubled ghosts—and partly because a Sunday service had proven the best way to attract converts in westernized Hong Kong.

In 1958-59 the buildings in which most ceremonies were held seemed generally to be called “shrine-halls of radiance” (*kuang-tien*). The sign over their door, however, might read “The Hall for Reciting the Words” or “The Hall of Twenty Words” (Nien-tzu T’ang); or still other names could be used.²⁷ Another term was “unit” (*tan-wei*). In 1958 there were said to be thirty “units” or parishes (*she*) in Hong Kong.²⁸

The centerpiece of every shrine-hall was not an image of the Founder but a large piece of undyed silk called the “Radiant Cloth” (*kuang-pu*). Although pictures of the Founder, along with Confucius, Lao-tzu, the Buddha, Jesus, and Muhammad, were usual in these temples, the Founder had opposed idolatry.²⁹ Often he would point to the Radiant Cloth, and tell his followers that Confucius, Lao-tzu, Kuan-yin, Jesus, or some divinity was present in the room and could be seen there; or that certain characters could be read. Huang told Welch that he himself had never seen anything, but that *other* disciples had; and the cloth could be used to get information from the gods. Some followers also used the planchette (*fu-chi*), either for communicating with the Founder or with Lü-tsu or other divinities. (Use of the planchette and sandtray is found in many new Chinese religions.)

A practice commonly carried on outdoors when rites were underway in the shrine-hall was the “release of living creatures” (*fang-*

sheng), the Buddhist practice made popular in China especially by Chu-hung (died 1615). The first time Welch visited the headquarters, two cages were opened and dozens of sparrows whirled off in different directions.

Since the religion openly claims to include Buddhism, there is nothing odd about its borrowing from Buddhism. However, a line of demarcation does seem to be drawn with other syncretic sects—perhaps because they seem so similar. In 1958-59 Huang acknowledged the similarities with the T'ung-shan She, the Red Swastika Society, and the I-kuan Tao, but he said that they were far less discriminating in the admission of new members.³⁰ No one was admitted to the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao until he had been strictly examined and it had been ascertained that he truly believed in the tenets of the Founder. Of course, the more esoteric tenets could not be revealed until after the higher initiation (as with Freemasonry in the West), so that what attracted people at the outset was the fact that they had been cured of disease or had heard about others being cured or about the remarkable events in the Founder's career (like his face appearing in the sun after he died). Being a Buddhist or Christian was no obstacle to joining. The apparent contradiction between the teachings of the five religions (or between their teachings and the Founder's) were said to be due to inaccuracies in transmission. Huang was not at all disturbed by John 10, for Jesus was indeed the only shepherd as far as the people of that religion and era were concerned.³¹

Huang kept emphasizing that the Founder's goal was to re-unite the five religions (*wu-chiao ho-i*) and to bring the ten thousand truths back into one (*wan-fa kwei-i*). Buddhists and Christians who joined did not have to give up their customary religious practices. Christians could continue going to their church; and one Buddhist monk had continued wearing his robe, practicing celibacy, and eating vegetarian food. This trend to synthesis began in the third or fourth centuries, grew stronger in the Sung dynasty, and reached a climax in the late Ming, when Three Teachings in One—Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism—became the vogue of the day. (This is an oversimplification of a complicated historical process.)

Development of the Sect: 1976-78

There are similarities between the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao and the I-kuan Tao. Their differences are great, but both combine the same five world religions. Both display the Chinese talent for synthesis. Both have a comparable emphasis on eschatology. Indeed, this element can often be seen in the new religions and cults that are growing today in many countries, including the United States. The T'ien-te Sheng-chiao seems to be part of a worldwide phenomenon that owes much to the decline of traditional beliefs.

The leaders of the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao in Taiwan in 1978 appeared more open than Welch had found them to be in Hong Kong two decades earlier. They wanted to become better known abroad. There are other differences too. For example, the annual prayer meetings that the Founder had prescribed (see p. 231) are not held in Taiwan. The rules posted in Taiwan temples of the sect are not identical with those that Welch saw in Hong Kong (see note 17). No diplomas are issued in Taiwan (see p. 229), although gradation by proficiency is a common feature of Chinese new religions. In Taiwan members of the sect do not wear yellow robes such as those Welch saw at the headquarters in Hong Kong (see note 19), but navy-blue robes. In Taiwan branches are sect not called "units" (*tan-wei*) as they are in Hong Kong. The sect apparently publishes no periodical, either in Taiwan or Hong Kong. This seems remarkable in view of the Chinese enjoyment of publication and the way new sects have produced new periodicals. In Taiwan the Founder's widow is referred to as "the teacher's wife" (*shih-mu*); also as "the honored teacher" (*shih-tsun*). No one in Taiwan seems to be called "head of the religion" (*chu-chiao*). The former Minister of the Interior, Wang Te-p'u, who has been its nominal head, is called "chairman" (*chu-jen wei-yüan*). Mao Tzu-ch'i, the man who runs its day-to-day operation in Taiwan is called "assistant chairman" (*fu-chu-jen wei-yüan*). He was a follower of the Founder for many years.

In both Taiwan and Hong Kong the Founder's widow was regarded in 1978 as the spiritual head of the entire religion. She had been born on the 5th day of the eleventh month (November 28, 1908). After she had married the Founder, she bore him no

children, but by a previous marriage he had a daughter, whom Huang Li-shan married. In 1976 the Founder's widow lived simply in Hong Kong. She tried to see as many followers as possible in the course of a year. This was difficult. The sect had been growing rapidly. In 1976 Hong Kong had 200 temples, compared to 30 in 1959. The number of directors (*ssu-ling*) of individual temples had grown too. In 1976 there were 300, whereas there had been far fewer in 1959. The membership of each branch temple differed. The largest in Hong Kong had about 5,000 members in 1976; the smallest about 500. Huang Li-shan was very candid in discussing membership. He said that Hong Kong had about ten thousand families who followed the religion. When asked if this did not mean that its total membership was about a hundred thousand individuals, Huang said no, this was too high a figure. He did not wish to give a figure. Many boat people belonged to the religion, he said, and they were a floating population who might move, for example, from Hong Kong to Macao. There were also followers who moved about overseas.

Huang felt in 1976 that the number of followers was rising too rapidly. He himself often spent fourteen hours a day on administering the religion. He also had his job. In 1959 he had been teaching philosophy in a Hong Kong private school. By 1976 he had become the head of a land development company. As a businessman he had the reputation of being very shrewd.

In both Hong Kong and Taiwan a striking equality has prevailed among followers of the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao, rather like the equality among deities in heaven (see page 227). Each branch in Hong Kong had its own directors, but they were not considered to be higher in status than other followers. Each branch was self-supporting and neither received a subsidy from the headquarters in Castle Peak nor was expected to turn over part of its receipts to Castle Peak. Whatever it turned over was a voluntary donation, the amount of which was set by the branch itself. Neither the headquarters nor any branch had a permanent endowment. Branches might help one another voluntarily. A branch in Hong Kong could be started by any follower once he had secured the blessing of the headquarters in Castle Peak. After it had been started, the head of the branch temple would ask Huang to come and give his blessing.

The Founder's widow seldom left Castle Peak, where she acted as the spiritual head of the whole religion and Huang as its practical head. In 1976, to slow the growth of the religion, there was the rule that all who wanted to become members had first to go through three years of probation. If they proved worthy, they were accepted as full members and received the second initiation (see p. 229).

Assessments

Thus we see that the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao seems to be flourishing as an egalitarian, democratic, non-profit church. The contrast with cults like those of the Moonies, the Maharaj Ji, or Sri Rajneesh seems refreshingly Chinese. There is no attempt to get followers to give all their property to the Holy Teaching of Heaven's Virtue. There is no effort to isolate its followers from the world outside and make them dependent on a father figure.

The Founder's widow (a mother figure) has preferred isolation to exerting a charismatic influence on her followers. Charisma does not seem to interest her. Nor does it interest Huang Li-shan. Politics seem as remote from their interests as making money out of their followers. The Founder made a prophecy that could be interpreted as anti-Communist in 1949-76. But there is nothing in this religion like the militant Korean anti-Communism of the Reverend Moon. Followers *are* healed, especially of psychosomatic ailments. They *are* given a set of beliefs that make them part of tradition—not only of their own traditions, but of two traditions that are non-Chinese. In the Holy Teaching of Heaven's Virtue there is much that some of us would agree is holy.

GLOSSARY

<i>ch'ao-yu</i>	超幽	<i>Chü-wai shen-yin</i>	局外神音
<i>chen</i>	真	<i>chüeh</i>	覺
<i>chen-yen</i>	真言	<i>Chün-t'ien Shang-ti</i>	鈞天上帝
<i>cheng</i>	正	<i>chün-tzu</i>	君子
<i>cheng-ch'ing</i>	正青		
<i>ch'eng-tao</i>	成道	<i>fa</i>	法
<i>ch'i</i>	氣	<i>fa-hui</i>	法會
<i>Ch'i-hsüan T'ien</i>	啟玄天	<i>fang-sheng</i>	放生
<i>chiaochu</i>	教主	<i>fang yen-k'ou</i>	放焰口
<i>Chi Kung</i>	暨公	<i>fen-ling</i>	分靈
<i>chi-lo</i>	祖樂	<i>Fo-tsu-t'ung chi</i>	佛祖統記
<i>Chi-Tsu</i>	暨祖	<i>fu-chi</i>	扶乩
<i>chieh</i>	紐	<i>fu-chu-jen wei-yüan</i>	副主任委員
<i>chieh</i>	節	<i>Fu-jung Chü</i>	芙蓉居
<i>Chieh-yüan ching</i>	解冤經		
<i>chien</i>	儼	<i>hao-chieh</i>	浩叔
<i>chih-ch'eng kan-ying</i>	至誠感應	<i>ho</i>	和
<i>chin-p'an chung-tzu</i>	金盤種子	<i>hsiao</i>	孝
<i>ching</i>	精	<i>Hsiao Ch'ang-ming</i>	蕭昌明
<i>ching-she</i>	精舍	<i>Hsien-sheng hsing</i>	先生性
<i>ching-shen</i>	精神	<i>Hsien-t'ien Ch'i</i>	先天氣
<i>ching-shen chih liao</i>	精神治療	<i>hsien-t'ien hsing</i>	先天性
<i>ch'ing</i>	磬	<i>Hsien-t'ien Ta-tao</i>	先天大道
<i>ch'ing-chen</i>	清真	<i>hsin</i>	信
<i>Ch'ing-ching Wu-liang Wang-fo</i>	清靜無量王佛	<i>hsing-ming shuang-hsiu chih ta-tao</i>	性命雙修之大道
<i>chu-ch'ih</i>	主持	<i>Hsü-yün</i>	虛雲
<i>chu-jen wei-yüan</i>	主任委員	<i>hu-fa</i>	護法
<i>chung</i>	忠	<i>Hu Shih</i>	胡適
<i>Chung i-Shan t'ang</i>	忠一善堂	<i>Huang Ch'ao</i>	黃巢
<i>Ch'ung-te She</i>	崇德社	<i>Huang Li-shan</i>	黃歷山
		<i>huang piao-chih</i>	黃表紙

Huang Shan	黃山	Liu-shen Chen-tao	大神真道同一會
hui-tao men	會道門	T'ung-i Hui	
Hung Wan-tzu Hui	紅化字會	Lü Tsu	呂祖
i	義	Lü Tung-pin	呂洞賓
I-ch'i	一氣	Lü-yin Shen-ch'u	綠蔭深處
I'ch'i Tsung-chu	一氣宗主	Mao Tsu-ch'üan	茅祖權
I-kuan Tao	一貫道	Mao Tzu-ch'i	毛子奇
jen	仁	ming	明
jen	忍	Nien-tzu T'ang	廿字堂
Jen-chien huo-chai	人間火宅	Nien-tzu chen-yen	廿字箴言
Jen-sheng chih-nan	人生指南	pa-kua	八卦
Ju-ting chieh-ching	入定捷徑	pao-chüan	寶卷
k'ai-tao shih	開道師	Pi-chi hsiao-shuo	筆記小說大觀
kan-ying	感應	ta-kuan	
k'an-kuang	看光	po	博
Kuan-yin	觀音	po-ai	博愛
Kuan-yü	關羽	she	社
kuang-pu	光布	shen	神
kuang-tien	光殿	shen-hsien	神仙
kuei-i	皈依	shih	師
kuei-ken	歸根	Shih-chieh Tsung-	世界宗教大同會
kung	公	chiao Ta-t'ung Hui	
Le-chih	樂至	shih-mu	師母
li	禮	Shih-t'ou Fang	石頭房
li-kuei	厲鬼	shih-tsun	師尊
Li Lin-shan	李林山	shu	恕
lien	廉	ssu-i	司儀
Ling-hsiung Pao-tien	凌雄寶殿	ssu-li	司理
ling-kuang pu-man	靈光佈滿虛空	ssu-ling	司令
hsü-k'ung	林語堂	ta-t'ung	大同
Lin Yü-t'ang		Ta-t'ung Tz'u-shan	大同慈善社
		She	

<i>t'ai-chiao</i>	胎教	<i>wai, nei kung</i>	外, 內功
<i>tan-wei</i>	單位	Wan-kuo Tao-te Hui	萬國道德會
T'ang Huan-chang	唐煥章	<i>wan-fa kwei-i</i>	萬法歸宗
Tao-te Hsüeh-she	道德學社	Wang Chen-nan	王震南
Tao-te She	道德社	Wang Te-p'u	王德溥
Tao Yüan	道院	<i>Wei-jen chih tao</i>	為人之道
<i>te</i>	德	Wu-chi	無極
Te-hua Tz'u-shan She	德化慈善社	<i>wu-chiao ho-i</i>	五教合一
<i>ti-i ch'uan</i>	第一傳	<i>wu-hsiang</i>	無相
Ti-tsang	地藏	<i>wu-hsing</i>	無性
<i>tien-tso</i>	點坐	<i>wu-hsing</i>	無形
<i>t'ien-chen</i>	天真	Wu-hsing Ku-fu	無形古佛
T'ien-te Sheng-chiao	天德聖教	Wu-i T'ang	五一堂
<i>ts'ang yü mi</i>	藏於密	Wu-sheng Lao-mu	無生老母
Tsou Lu	鄒魯	Wu-sheng Sheng-mu	無生聖母
Tsung-chiao Che-hsüeh Yen-chiu She	宗教哲學研究社	<i>wu-se</i>	無色
<i>Tsung-chiao ta-t'ung</i>	宗教大同推進問答書	<i>yang</i>	陽
<i>t'ui-chin wen-ta shu</i>		Yen-lo Wang	閻羅王
T'ung-shan She	同善社	<i>yin</i>	陰
Tzu-chüeh Ching-she	自覺精舍	<i>yu-yu hsiu-wu</i>	由有修無
<i>tzu-jan</i>	自然	<i>yüan-kuang</i>	圓光
<i>tz'u</i>	慈		
<i>tz'u-pei</i>	慈悲		

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* The information in this article was gathered over a period of two decades. Welch began gathering it when he first encountered the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao in Hong Kong during 1958. He spent three years investigating it as time allowed. In 1961 he started work on his three books about modern Chinese Buddhism. In 1975 he resumed work on the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao and compiled the first version of this article. It was accepted for publication in 1976. That year, however, Welch's son passed through Hong Kong and, at Welch's request, interviewed Huang Li-shan and asked many of the troublesome questions that remained unclear. In this taped interview essential help was given by the interpreter, Chang P'ei-ju, an old and valued friend of Welch.

Towards the end of 1976 Welch fell ill and was hospitalized for many months. In 1978 Welch's colleague, Yü Chün-fang, visited Taiwan to attend her father's funeral. As a graduate student on Taiwan in the late 1960s she had once joined the I-kuan Tao so that she might learn more about China's new religions. Yet before 1978 she had never heard of the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao and doubted its existence in Taiwan, however popular it might be in Hong Kong. Much to her surprise she found that it not only existed but was flourishing in Taiwan. She met its titular head, who had been a Minister of the Interior and a friend of her late father. It had been legalized in 1974. The fact that its head had known her father gave Yü an entrée at the highest level. She attended ceremonies, was healed of shoulder pains, took many photographs, and asked many questions, including those that had occurred to her in reading Welch's preliminary version of this article.

Yü shared Welch's opinion that much had been published on new religions in Japan, but little on Chinese new religions. Even Daniel Overmyer in his excellent *Buddhist Folk Religion* (Harvard, 1976) mentions nothing like the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao (though he mentions the I-kuan Tao, for example, six times). Nor does Overmyer mention the T'ung-shan She, the Tao Yüan, and the Wan-kuo Tao-te Hui. He had not heard of the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao—although it claimed to have had over three million members in China before 1949, including some famous men.

Late in 1978 Yü and Welch listened to the tape made of Huang Li-shan in 1976. Welch asked Yü to help complete this article.

Thus it contains information collected about the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao in Hong Kong during 1958-61 and 1976 and information about it in Taiwan collected in 1978. It would complicate the article unnecessarily to state who collected which information when. This will usually be clear to the reader who keeps in mind how the article came into being.

¹ The titles of some of them were *Jen-chien huo-chai* ("The burning house of this world"), *Wei-jen chih tao* ("The way for man"), *Ju-ting-chieh ching* ("The sutra of victory in entering samadhi"—on techniques of meditation), *Chieh-yüan ching* ("The sutra on the release of the wronged"), *Tsung-chiao ta-t'ung t'ui-chin wen-ta shu* ("Questions and answers to introduce the Great Harmony of religions"—written to answer questions from prospective converts), and *Chü-wai shen-yin* ("The divine voice from beyond").

² The text of the will seems almost jejune. "For more than forty years I have been expounding the truth of the Twenty Words, never ceasing to wish that I might rectify the hearts of men and avert the end. In this, my last incarnation, I have used all my strength loudly and urgently appealing for people to realize they have taken the wrong path, but that their salvation is at hand if they would only look for it. This is what those who follow my way and people in society at large must come together in realizing. After I depart from the world, my essence and spirit (*ching-shen*) will remain as before, although my body dissolves. [My] divine radiance will diffuse and fill the Void (*ling-kuang pu-man hsiü-k'ung*) and never be destroyed. If anyone prays devoutly, the response will be profound. I hope that those who have been with me will advance the Way and its Virtue, rectify their own lives, and convert others. Only if they make a personal effort will they naturally receive the many rewards of goodness. As for religious activities, my ideas must be carried out with an ever more earnest effort to make the greatness of the Radiance reach to the ends of the earth so that all men may taste the joys of the Great

Harmony and the true transmission of the robe and bowl will never be lost. Dying without regret, I make this my last will." The next-to-last sentence of this will is an allusion to the transmission of the robe and bowl by the first patriarchs of Ch'an Buddhism in the 6th-8th centuries. "The Way and its Virtue" (middle of this will) is the title of Lao-tzu's book, the basic scripture of Taoism.

³ He had already told his followers, shortly before he died, that he would be going far away and not come back. In retrospect this was interpreted to mean that he had not simply died, but had ascended to heaven. Many Buddhist monks too have cryptically foretold their deaths.

⁴ An air duct is unusual in Chinese tombs. Perhaps the Founder remembered his experience as a child and was afraid of being buried alive; or expected to revive.

⁵ There seem to be unusually many symbolic numbers in the life story of the Founder. He was resurrected after *three* days when he was *five* years old (by Chinese reckoning). He died when he was *forty-nine*—and this is the number of days in a Buddhist funeral service. One is also struck by the fact that his first death took place in the last year of the 19th century. We have tried to verify these symbolic numbers. In the absence of verification, one must wonder about hagiographical adjustment.

⁶ Wu-sheng Sheng-mu is perhaps another name for Wu-sheng Lao-mu (the Unborn Venerable Mother or Unborn Ancient Mother), whom Daniel Overmyer discusses in *Folk Buddhist Religion* (Harvard, 1976). Wu-sheng Lao-mu was the supreme deity of the I-kuan Tao in the 19th century and earlier of White Lotus groups (Overmyer, p. 106). She was apparently identical with the Mother who gave birth to *yin* and *yang* and to two children, Fu-hsi and Nü-kua, who in turn produced 960,000,000 [sic] descendants, all human (Overmyer, pp. 135-141). This story comes from a late Ming "precious scroll" (*pao-chüan*) entitled the "Dragon Flower Scripture," which tells how the Old Buddha (or Ancient Buddha) and the Eternal Mother are enthroned in paradise. Overmyer traces Wu-sheng Lao-mu back to Hsi Wang-mu, the Mother in the West. The complex variations through Chinese history on the theme of a mother goddess are summarized by Overmyer on pp. 138-145.

⁷ The number 9,600,000,000 is exactly the same number as is used by some other sects in their cosmogonies (see preceding note). Overmyer has kindly drawn our attention to p. 180ff. in J. J. M. De Groot, *Sectarianism and Religious Persecution in China* (Amsterdam, 1903). De Groot there discusses the doctrines of the Hsien-t'ien Tao, which he identifies with the Wu-wei Chiao. Both religions were founded by a man surnamed Lo in the late Ming dynasty. The dates of these men—or one man—named Lo are given differently in various sources, as De Groot points out. In any case, the Hsien-t'ien Tao was marked by a strict vegetarianism incumbent on all members at all times (whereas it is only occasional in the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao); by the absence of images (which are likewise not to be found on the central altars of the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao); and by indifference to celibacy (as in the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao).

De Groot describes as follows the cosmogony that was advocated by the Hsien-t'ien Tao. Originally 9,600,000,000 beings were created by Wu-chi ("the Apex of Nothingness," as De Groot translates the combination of *yin* and *yang* from which all else is said to have evolved). In the era of Former or Prior Heaven (Hsien-t'ien), 200,000,000 of these beings were saved by "light-making Buddhas." In the era of middle Heaven (Chung-t'ien) 200,000,000 more were saved by Sakyamuni (the Buddha in India). Therefore 9,200,000,000 remain to be saved in our own era.

Hsiao Ch'ang-ming was evidently familiar with this cosmogony and incorporated it into his own. A full comparison of the doctrines of the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao with those of other sects is beyond the scope of this article. We only note the more striking similarities and dissimilarities between the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao and other syncretistic religions or sects. To a large extent, they shared a common fund of names and concepts.

⁸ His full name is I-ch'i Tsung-chu or "Master of the doctrine who has the unitary breath." He is identified with Hsien-t'ien Ch'i, the "Breath of Former Heaven." On the concept of Former Heaven (which seems to be ever lurking in the background here), see Marjorie Topley, "The Great Way of the Former Heaven: A Chinese Semi-Secret Religion in Malaya," *The New Malayan* 2:13-23 (1957), and "The Great Way of Former Heaven: A Group of Chinese Secret Religious Sects," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 26.2:362-392 (1963). One of the aspects of the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao that needs research is the relationship of its cosmogony and pantheon to those of the Former Heaven sects. The Unborn Holy Mother, for example, seems to be an exact counterpart of the Unborn Ancient Mother (Wu-sheng Lao-mu) discussed by Topley and Overmyer.

⁹ In 1958-59 Huang did not seem to be sure that the final period began in the Han.

¹⁰ The idea of eternal damnation seems curiously Western. China had an ancient belief that a man's animal soul (*p'o*, as opposed to *hun*) would after death descend to the Yellow Springs, where it would gradually fade away. In orthodox Buddhism damnation was not eternal, but subject to the operation of karma. One cannot help wondering whether Chinese sectarians developed the idea of eternal damnation independently or whether they may not have been influenced by Nestorian and later Christians, as well as by Muslims.

¹¹ This is similar to the drama in Heaven that plays a role in other sectarian groups. See, for example, De Groot, *Sectarianism*, p. 180. Lo Huai was sent by Wu-chi to save mankind in the Wan-li period (1573-1620).

¹² The use of aliases is not unique to the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao. De Groot, Overmyer, Topley, and others give us many examples. The use of aliases had two advantages besides the one that is said to have attracted the Founder. First, when the central government was strong, it attempted to suppress heretodox religions as subversive, and they were harder to identify and suppress if they were hidden by aliases. Second, they were easier for their leaders to spread because of the Chinese appreciation of complexity. That is, a layman was likelier to join a sect if he learned that actually it was the same as a sect that he had heard about but thought separate. Aliases could have opposite effects. A weak local official was less likely to suppress a sect that might have ramifications in the capital. A strong local official would suppress it all the more vigorously, since the law required him to do so. This is why the tradition of one sect having several names went back to the Ming dynasty.

¹³ According to the Founder's autobiographical preface to his "The Compass of Life" (see p. 224), this was the name that he had chosen for use by local branches. It could equally well be translated "Religion and Philosophy Research Center." Once in 1958-59 Huang spoke of it as a department within the headquarters.

¹⁴ The organization in Shanghai that reprinted "The Compass of Life" in 1945 was the "Twenty Word (Nien-tzu) Center for Revering Virtue." Here "center" is an awkward translation of *she*, which means "religious community."

¹⁵ The *chu* in *chu-ch'ih* lacks the "man" radical, and with this radical added to *chu*, *chu-ch'ih* is the noun "manager" or "head monk" used in Buddhist temples.

Rules for the Prayer Meetings of the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao

1. The altar precincts are a solemn place: it is not permitted to make a hubbub.
2. When you hear the bell, gather for prayer: it is not permitted to be a moment late.
3. Clothing should be clean and neat: it is not permitted to roll up one's sleeves and open one's bosom.
4. Going and coming to your place in the row, it is not permitted to walk through the hall with your back to the sage.
5. Obeisance must be orderly: one is not permitted to mix up the sequence.
6. The sutras must be chanted clearly: one is not permitted to mumble or slur.
7. Your manner must be relaxed and dignified: one is not permitted to display agitation or put on airs.
8. Be prepared when it is time for your row: one is not permitted to interrupt or break off in the middle.
9. Take your turn in chanting: one is not permitted to stop a sutra after a meal.
10. When you leave your row, sit quietly: one is not permitted to play games, laugh, or nap.
11. Records must be written with reverent care: one is not permitted to leave things out and then insert them.
12. The meaning of words must be carefully considered: one is not permitted to slip over things or read them wrong.
13. Direction must be scrupulous: one is not permitted to become bewildered and jumble the ceremonies.
14. When excusing oneself to go to the latrine, one must wash one's hands afterwards.

All these rules must be strictly obeyed to avoid offense.

These are the kind of rules that would be necessary for laymen not intensively trained, as monks were, to perform rites with automatic polish and style.

Translating *fa-hui* as "prayer meeting" does not do justice to the breadth of its connotations or to its Buddhist origins. Literally a "dharma gathering," it can be applied to lectures on sacred texts, to exorcism, to rites for the dead, and almost any collective religious activity.

²⁴ In 1958 a *cheng-ch'ing* in Tsuen Wan was said to have been insubordinate, but was being brought in line. Obedience was not to be expected, of course, from persons who were borrowing the name of the religion without authorization.

The methods of healing and meditation that are used in the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao deserve further study. Aside from what Welch witnessed, Yü Chün-fang experienced its healing methods herself and saw them used on others.

Healing may be the commonest element in China's new religions, going back to the Han dynasty. Religious Taoism has been as much concerned with healing as with anything else (particularly if this is taken to mean healing from the disease of death). Since the Yüan dynasty healing has been a mainstay of the White Lotus. It is a vast subject. The same is true of methods of meditation. Welch and Yü hope to explore comparatively in a later publication the methods of healing and meditation used in the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao and other sectarian religions.

²⁵ This consisted not of the regular "Hell Banknotes," but of blank sheets called "yellow forms" (*huang piao-chih*).

²⁶ Ch'ing-ching Wu-liang Wang-fo oversees the work of the two divinities previously accepted as having jurisdiction over hell—Yen-lo Wang and the bodhisattva Ti-tsang.

²⁷ In Chinese "twenty" and "to recite" are homophones. Hong Kong in 1958-59 had a "Five-in-One Hall" (Wu-i T'ang), a "Self-Realization Hermitage" (Tzu-chüeh Ching-she), a "Cheng-ch'ing Hall of the Tao," and a "Hall for Loyalty as the First Goodness" (Chung-i Shan-t'ang). These were among the six branches of the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao registered in 1958-59 with the Secretariat for Chinese Affairs. The other twenty odd claimed by Huang were either unregistered or went under names not obviously connected with this religion. (Failure to register was not uncommon among religious establishments in Hong Kong.)

²⁸ In China the term *she* could be used for temple buildings and/or parishes. *Ching-she* is a hermitage or retreat house.

²⁹ When Welch visited a small temple of the religion in Wanchai in 1958, he found that the portrait of the Founder was hung in the middle of the cloth. On the altar underneath were polychrome statues of Kuan-yü, Chi-tsu (Chi-kung), and Kuan-yin, as well as an incense burner, candlesticks, a bronze bowl or *ch'ing* (struck as a gong), wooden fish, and a jar of holy water used for healing. Since Kuan-yü was protector of the religion (*hu-fa*—a Buddhist term in origin), he also had a separate altar all to himself. Because the occasion of Welch's visit was the birthday of Confucius, he too had a separate altar that day. The altar arrangement Yü saw in Taipei was similar.

³⁰ These three are also "new religions" that purport to include the teachings of Confucius, Lao-tzu, the Buddha, and, in the case of the latter two, Jesus, and Muhammad. The T'ung-shan She and Red Swastika Society, along with several similar groups, are discussed in Paul De Witt Twinem, "Modern Syncretic Religious Societies in China," *Journal of Religion* 5.5:463-482 (September 1925) and 5.6:595-606 (November 1925); Gilbert Reid, "Recent Religious Movements in China," in *The China Mission Year Book*, No. 12 (1924), pp. 59-66; and L. Hodous, "Non-Christian Religious Movements in China," in *The Christian Occupation of China* (ed. Milton T. Stauffer), Shanghai, 1922, pp. 27-31.

The T'ung-shan She is the subject of a mimeographed book, John C. DeKorne, *The Fellowship of Goodness (T'ung Shan She): A Study of Contemporary Chinese Religion* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1941). This sect was apparently founded in Peking in 1914 to practice self-cultivation and carry on charitable activities. Dr. Topley (see note 5) has found evidence that it claimed descent from the same line of patriarchs as several sects of the Great Way of Former Heaven; and that its head in recent decades was considered to be an incarnate buddha (like the Founder of the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao).

On the Red Swastika Society (Hung Wan-tzu Hui) see also L. Hodous, "The Chinese Church of the Five Religions," *Journal of Religion* 4.1:71-76 (January 1924) and a multigraphed pamphlet by C. T. Wang, "Origin and Progress of the World Red Swastika Society." Wang, formerly Chinese Foreign Minister, headed the society for many years in Hong Kong. It was the social-action arm of the Tao Yüan ("Institute for the Tao") or Tao-te She ("Center for the Way and Its Virtue"). It started in Shantung in 1916 as a cult that specialized in getting divine instructions through the planchette. In 1921 four of its members, acting on such instructions, took a photograph of God on top of a mountain near Tsinan. (Welch saw the photograph: it was of a bushily bearded and benign old man who looked more European than Chinese.) God is considered in the sect to be the Heaven of Confucius; the Tao of the Taoists; the Jehovah of the Judeo-Christians; the Buddha; and Allah. By 1937, despite occasional proscription, the sect claimed five hundred

branches in China and one in Kobe, Japan. Like the T'ung-shan She it carried on charitable activities—clinics, schools, and relief work. Also like the T'ung-shan She its membership was largely upper-class.

Less is known about the I-kuan Tao ("Way of the Unity that Pervades"), which started in Shantung about 1920 or, according to Overmyer, in the middle of the nineteenth century. Yü Chün-fang, who once joined the I-kuan Tao, believes that its activities have been relatively secret and perhaps more political than those of other sects. According to Dr. Topley, it traces its descent to the same lineage as the T'ung-shan She. Some 33 of its publications are discussed by Willem A. Grootaers in "Une société secrète moderne, I-koan-tao," *Folklore Studies* 5:316-352 (1946). His materials reveal close parallels with the millennialism of the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao—even containing the same kind of drama in heaven. Dr. Topley cites an article by Kubo Noritada, "I-kuan-tao ni tsuite," *Tōyō Bunka kenkyū kiyō* (Tokyo), no. 4, 1953, pp. 173-249.

It is a striking fact that all three of these sects originated in the same part of China at about the same time and shared the same syncretic acceptance of many of the major world religions. Reid (pp. 61, 65) mentions another such sect, the Wan-kuo Tao-te Hui started in Tsinan by a child prodigy like the Founder of the T'ien-te Sheng-chiao; while Twinem (*op. cit.*) and Hodous, in "A Chinese Millenarian," *Journal of Religion* 4.6:592-599 (November 1924) discuss the Liu-shen Chen-tao T'ung-i Hui (called by Reid the Tsung-chiao Ta-t'ung Hui), which was started in Szechwan by T'ang Huan-chang, who had come in contact with Christianity and predicted "a great catastrophe."

³¹ Welch had expected him to take a Buddhist line and say that in each incarnation the Formless Ancient Buddha used words and ideas in accordance with the capacity and predilections of his audience—as expedient means.

BELIEF: A REPLY TO A RESPONSE

WILFRED CANTWELL SMITH

In the attempt to understand and to interpret, or even to refute or to defend, religious ways of living, the role of belief as a central category used to be major in Western scholarship but has 'recently come under heavy criticism', as Prof. Donald Wiebe in his recent article in this journal rightly observes ('The Role of "Belief" in the Study of Religion', *Numen*, 26 [1979]: 234-249). Resolute to champion the traditional view, he sets out to answer that recent criticism; and specifically to show that those with the newer outlook are 'confused' (234 *et passim*). He specifically gives his article the sub-title, 'A Response to W. C. Smith'. His review of my *Belief and History* constitutes, however, so massive a misunderstanding of my expressed position that one wonders how, or even whether, to reply. I could either berate him for undertaking publicly an 'analysis and criticism' of a thesis that he has manifestly come nowhere near to comprehending, or else I could berate myself for having set forth that thesis without, apparently, making it at all clear. Certainly there has been a radical failure of communication; and I am left unsure whether the most appropriate might not be simply to weep. Let me attempt a rejoinder, however; even if with heavy heart.

One may be allowed to feel that the failure was perhaps not altogether mine, since Wiebe, although focussing on my work, includes in his strictures Bellah's surely lucid and powerful *Beyond Belief*, and the anthropologist Needham's brilliant *Belief, Language, and Experience*, so that evidently there is a clash of two ways of envisioning our subject, rather than simply a 'naiveté' (238; cf. 237) or obtuseness or confusion that 'bedevils' (238) the exposition of one of them. To me, it would seem clear that Wiebe's mind is operating within the confines of a prevalent 'paradigm' (his word, from Kuhn) 'for interpreting the meaning of religious phenomena' (234); and although he begins by explicitly recognizing that this is being challenged by a proposed alternative, he nonetheless continues by assessing the new within the confines of the old, and by its stan-

dards. He succeeds in proving only that there it does not nicely fit. The history of religious movements abounds, of course, with instances of an encounter between two outlooks where the proponent of one simply failed to understand the other, and proved to their own satisfaction and on their own premisses that the conclusions of the misrepresented other appeared illogical. One would have hoped, however, that an historian of religion (but perhaps Wiebe is rather a philosopher of religion?) would have by now become sufficiently sophisticated to be able to handle such a situation intellectually, and would not simply re-enact it.

It is perhaps a whit curious that I elaborated the matter of diverging world-views in my opening chapter, which is addressed specifically to modern-Western philosophy of religion and considers its adequacy or otherwise to interpreting the history of religion—yet this is the one chapter of the work on which Wiebe has nothing to say. It is not even mentioned.

The magnitude of the proposed revision of modern-Western-academic theories (especially philosophic) about religion is recognized; and indeed is proffered as a substantial—though admittedly, not a decisive—argument against adopting it, on the grounds that it would require ‘costly’ (234) rethinking of cherished ways. I found this a trifle amazing, as if Columbus’ report of having discovered America were rejected on the grounds that to think in terms of a round world with new continents would involve too troublesome a refashioning of prevailing thought. The fundamental contribution of my book, and the central substance of its argument, is the report of a major empirical discovery. The unexpected, rather monumental, fact is demonstrated, that the words ‘belief’, ‘believing’ have drastically changed their meanings since they were used as central religious terms. Wiebe, like everyone else, had obviously been unaware of this previously (as indeed had I); but he does not dispute the painstaking and substantial evidence, nor question the conclusion. The fact as presented means a radical new awareness for us. I go on then to attempt to digest it; and propound a new way of looking at religious life in the light of this new knowledge. It seems rather pathetic to be told that we should not pay attention to the discovery, since the requisite shift in our established academic outlook would be too demanding. (There is even a slight suggestion

[p. 237] that to abandon the established mode is unwelcome because it would deprive philosophers of their prerogative to pronounce on whether religion is true or not.)

Wiebe does go on, however, to contend that, even if we tacitly accept the new historical awareness of fact, it is still not logically necessary to draw from it a particular conclusion. Yet this is not the conclusion that in fact I drew!—nor that Bellah argued on other grounds, nor that Needham (or Phillips) did on still others. That religion has throughout lacked an ideational component is, says Wiebe, a *non sequitur* from the data that I adduce. Of course! I fully agree. This is where the pitiful misunderstandings proliferate. Wiebe seeks to bolster his point by calling me confused, for he can then cite, and does, passages from my book where I recognize—as anyone must—that religious persons and communities have indeed operated intellectually at various points in history with various ideas and sets of ideas. But I have not said that religious people have not ‘believed’ things in this sense. What I have said is that until recent times no one affirmed that it was religiously important to believe them. This, which is quite different, he does not dispute; does not appear to notice. Surely it is not insignificant? Neither the creeds (surprisingly!) nor the Bible (surprisingly!) have anything to say about believing. Is it not significant to establish this? That those who wrote each believed something, I did not and do not deny. To make their believing central, however, and to mistranslate what they *did* say as if they themselves thought believing important, is to misunderstand religious history. At least, it is on this point that a serious discussion should focus.

Wiebe is right, no doubt, in arguing that even Zen Buddhists, in denying, as Bellah reports, ‘the value of any beliefs at all’, are in fact implicitly ‘believing’ something; but such believing they do not emphasize explicitly, let alone proffer as salvific. It is the value of the beliefs, not the fact of believing them, that is reported as being denied; and it is odd that so acute a mind as Wiebe’s should confuse the two.

Moreover, once again if one looks up a couple of pages (220 ff.) in Bellah’s book, from which Wiebe quotes a couple of sentences, one finds that the argument that he plans to demolish misrepresents Bellah’s position rather radically. Bellah does not say that Christian

faith is fundamentally doctrinal, Zen non-doctrinal, and Zen therefore better; rather, he contends that Christian faith has not been doctrinal either: that the doctrinal interpretation of it has been imposed.

This misreading of those that he would criticize is re-iterated. For example, he quotes (244) Hick as saying 'Faith as trust... presupposes faith as cognition of the object of that trust', without apparently recognizing the significance of 'presupposing' here, the very notion that I much stressed, and endeavored to analyse. In fact, it is curious how he gradually moves in the course of his argument to a position that in fact converges with some of what I was, in quite different terms, setting forth. For example, he finally qualifies his defense of an ideational component in religious life by conceding it to be at times (à la Yinger) 'non-doctrinal' (247) or dispositional rather than 'a conscious mental state' (246), and even conceding belief to be 'not a sufficient condition of faith' (247). (He still does not address my empirical discovery that no significant classical religious thinker ever said that it is a necessary condition of faith either.) And note his summarizing conclusion, 'to talk of religion is to talk of—besides commitments—ideas, interpretations and doctrines, etc.' (p. 244; my punctuation): is this not a latter-day rewording of my earlier *Meaning and End of Religion* (which he strongly repudiates), his remark being translatable into: '...to talk of religion is to talk of, besides faith, cumulative tradition'?

Wiebe contends, virtually, that I am naive in holding that one knows (rather than believes) that one's wife exists. Actually, he himself calls such awareness 'simply part of the background knowledge with which we function' (237), though he seems, uncertainly, to go on to equate it rather with intuition, which in turn he disparages. He has quite misunderstood my argument about recognizing. His basic misunderstanding here is apparently due, as is many modern philosophers' of language, to his not having learned to think historically (and especially, in the zest for analysing language, he—like them—has not learned to analyse it historically). This is so, even though I specifically devote a section to the historical shift that besets 'recognizing' (involving Copernicus, Bacon, and ourselves). Oddly enough, he himself inadvertently uses the verb 'recognizes' in the very sentence in which he derides

me for using it ('Smith's difficulty in recognizing this lies, I suggest, in his somewhat naive epistemology' [237]).

By 'naive' here he actually means, to preserve the pejorative tone, 'old-fashioned'; or more neutrally, my rather traditional, or, more positively or charitably, by more classical epistemology. Since nothing is gained by our simply calling each other names, I shall refrain from calling his epistemology in turn naive, which I could otherwise equally well do. More analytically, I could remark that unlike him I am not a victim of particular fashions dominant in much current Anglo-Saxon philosophy of religion (which I give reasons for rejecting in my first chapter: basically, on the considered grounds that while that philosophy is oriented to the natural sciences it is inappropriate, certainly inadequate, to the study of human history, with its cultural diversity). He again uses, evidently unselfconsciously, that word 'recognizes' to introduce his own theory of knowledge, as if the matter were incontrovertible. 'Knowing' he asserts, 'is nothing more than believing (with subjective certainty, or near certainty) plus, so to speak, firm intersubjectively testable evidence' (237)—a positivistic theory that has less agreement than he seems to suppose among modern scholars, and in any case is helpless before the very question here at issue: namely, whether medieval theists, or indeed medievals generally, knew anything. (Does he seriously think that knowledge begins with the twentieth century?) (It is amusing to reflect that, on this definition of knowledge, no woman could know whether or not she had committed adultery long ago with a man now dead; and no Muslim whose wife observed *pardah* could know whether his wife existed. Is it any wonder that historians of religion find philosophers of religion unpersuasive?)

Wiebe is also silent before my argument that medieval theists 'believed', in his sense, equally in the existence of both God and a Devil, while advocating faith only in the former, explicitly and emphatically not in the latter. From this argument I inferred (illegitimately?) that faith and belief were, for such a religious position, different.

This point leads into the next (his next, also). 'The only way', he writes, '[that] Smith can deny, then, that there is an element of believing here [sc. in the Bible] is to claim that the "intellectual

component'' is knowledge' (238). This statement is simply wrong. I neither deny that there is an element of 'believing', nor do I claim that it is knowledge. What I asserted is that in the situation presented in the Bible the writers and protagonists either believed what they believed unselfcritically, as unconscious presupposition, or else they thought that they knew. Therefore, they did not ask anyone explicitly to believe anything. I pointed out, for instance, explicitly both (i) that Jesus manifestly believed in devils, and (ii) that *there is no way of saying in Biblical Greek that he believed in devils*.

This is not the place to develop my argument, obviously; anyone interested will presumably take the trouble to read the book. All that I am attempting to show here is that that argument is radically different from what Wiebe undertakes to criticize, indeed to demolish. He has, simply, woefully misunderstood the thesis. I do not ask that he agree with it; I would welcome informed and sensitive discussion. But I would plead that it not be caricatured.

He moves on to criticize my earlier positions, specifically as set forth in my 1963 work *The Meaning and End of Religion*. Once again, however, he flatly misrepresents what I explicitly say in that volume. For example, he attributes to me the view (he says that I regard it as 'an apparently self-evident truth', which is surely ridiculous: had I thought it self-evident, I would not have written that large, meticulous, difficult book to argue it) 'that religion is something essentially personal and esoteric' [*personal* I did indeed urge; *esoteric* is a word I never used] 'and so a matter of the subjective experience of the individual (i.e., that it is a matter of "faith") and not objectifiable (i.e., a matter of rites, rituals, social institutions, belief systems, etc. or any combination of them)'. How can a presumably responsible scholar assert something so preposterous?—when the thesis of that elaborate, carefully argued, heavily documented study was not that religion is the one and not the other, but precisely *that it is both*. It was to assert and to preserve the double involvement that I proposed my two terms, faith and tradition—the latter defined in terms of its objectifiability—as more helpful than the traditional single one, sorely ambiguous, for analysing it. And I argued that faith and tradition were in constant interplay. Again referring to that same book, Wiebe writes (239f.) that I 'insist there' that '*Real* religion... concerns the inner faith of

the individual person and not the external expression' (emphasis his)—whereas I never used the concept 'real religion' (indeed, I expressly and carefully argued that what has been called religion or a religion cannot have an essence); and the rest of his statement would be closer to fair if we replace 'and not' by 'and also'! As his attack proceeds, he tacitly almost admits that his exposition is in some ways (of course he does not realize how drastically) a misapprehension, by noting that I do not, in fact, 'accept' (241) the conclusions that he has inferred from what he presents as my positions, and that in fact I end up with views more convergent with what he himself avers as reasonable scholarly goals.

In one rather poignant sentence in his essay, he writes (of the faith/tradition distinction): 'It is difficult to conceive, if expression has any intrinsic connection to the faith it expresses, how faith and expression have such different sources' (239). This is intended to be rhetorical, it seems; as if the difficulty mentioned were an argument against making that distinction, were an argument against interpreting religious life in terms of personal inner faith on the one hand, and on the other, external observable expressions of faith—rites, institutions, doctrines, and the rest. Surely this is insensitive? Throughout humanity's religious life these many centuries echoes a re-iterated affirmation that through those rites, those institutions, those doctrines and all, persons have been related to something quite beyond such things, to a transcendent mystery, God, nirvana, or whatever. Accordingly it is of course difficult to conceive precisely what the relation is between that transcendent and those mundane observables. Religious men and women have been saying for thousands of years on every continent in an almost bewildering variety of vocabulary that their faith and the affairs of the mundane world have different sources (at least immediately). It is hardly a new discovery that the scholar who attempts to conceptualize intelligibly this double involvement of the human is tackling a difficulty. To recognize the difficulty is not an admission of defeat so much as the price of getting seriously started in our task. My proposed solution to the difficulty he does not understand, and does not criticize; he apparently thinks that it is obfuscating to raise the issue.

Another sentence in the assault is significant. Wiebe suggests that 'Critical discussion... would have been more appropriate if Smith had applied it to clarifying the meaning and range of application of the concept rather than in an attempt to dissuade us from its use' (241). As already indicated, I do not in fact attempt to dissuade scholars from using the concept; only from using it unselfcritically, and/or ambiguously, and from making it central in religious interpretation, and especially from imagining it anachronistically central as a concept for religious persons' self-interpretation. I have shown the inescapable ambiguity of the term, also: not only between other centuries and ours, but between first and third person usage, between Roman Catholic and Protestant, and various others. Moreover, to his wish that I would apply critical discussion to 'clarifying the meaning and range of [the concept's] application', this also I have in fact done, at considerable length in a work that occupied me for twelve years and that was published shortly after Wiebe's article (Smith, *Faith and Belief*, Princeton, 1979). (There is reference to this as forthcoming, in the shorter study *Belief and History* which Wiebe examined, but apparently he decided not to wait for it. I am hopeful that it will clear up some of his perplexities.)

I have written above as if he might have been expected to be less slow in discerning the theses of the work that he criticizes; might have failed less markedly in appreciating what was being proposed. I am distressed, certainly, at gross misrepresentation. Nonetheless, one may concede that the issues involved are indeed deep, the established prejudices of current secular Western thinking on religion are indeed entrenched, and adequate interpretation of human history in its variegated religious aspect is indeed subtle. Much careful inquiry, self-critical reflection, sensitive conceptual creativity, are requisite if we are to make significant progress in the almost daunting task of attempting to make intellectual sense of our almost bewilderingly varied data. The opening sentence of the preface of the book that he berates concedes that 'The thesis of this book is radical', and I predict there that, though simple, by some that thesis would be resisted, or found 'unmanageable'. Rather than complaining at any ineptitude on others' part in understanding what those of us are propounding who are breaking new

ground in this field, I would rather invite Wiebe and others to join with us in the demanding task of re-thinking some of our basic categories, in order that we may do more justice to our material.

Or, if they do not wish to join in, let us plead that they assess—and, certainly, intelligently criticize—what we are doing, recognizing that the difference between it and established positions is a proposed difference of categories and of fundamentals. We are questioning the presuppositions and revising the premisses of earlier outlooks; and would invite a judicious and critical comparison of two seriously different basic positions. As remarked above, Wiebe begins by averring that the new proposals represent a Kuhnian revolution (his p. 234); would that he had gone on genuinely aware that that was what is involved. Nothing is gained by attempting to show to their own satisfaction that, judged on their premisses, which remain unexamined, the new work appears strange.

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THREE BOOKS ON SUFISM*

(Review article)

MARILYN ROBINSON WALDMAN

Why concern thyself so much with words? If thou art a man of
valour enter boldly into the state of mystics.
If thy heart finds peace in words how can it acquire fame
through the condition of true men?
These words are after all nothing but a shell; seek, like a true
man, to attain to the mystical state.
Thou hast spent all thy precious life in talking—when wilt
thou act?
However perfect poetry may be, when thou considerest it is
but the menstruation of men.
If thy heart had but the slightest morsel of knowledge thou
wouldst have nothing at all to do with story-telling.
But I see that thy poetry is always thy idol; thy sole occupation
is idolatry.

—‘Aṭṭār¹

In words like these have many mystical poets undervalued their own medium of communication. Speaking about mysticism in general or Ṣūfism in particular is by definition a paradox—the ineffable cannot be described but must; the experience cannot be communicated but one has to try. The verbal formulations of experience that one studies, and uses, undermine their own validity or at least remain dim reflections of their subject. Speaking about mysticism always involves a search for a correct authorial voice, a correct way to evoke what one's only sources cannot fully describe. The dilemma has been confronted recently by Frits Staal, who has suggested that the study of mystical experiences be separated from the study of the description and interpretation of them, and that the latter, which he calls “superstructures,” be recognized as such.² It is the presentation of “superstructures,” highly emotive and evocative, often used for therapeutic and other behavior-altering purposes, that demands a special voice.

Although the works under review can be arranged to tell us about the history of the field and the state of its art, they can also be made

to show us the various “voices” their authors have adopted to deal with the problematic of mystical studies. A number of elements affect the nature of these authorial voices: the amount of material an author attempts to cover, the balance between his/her quotation and paraphrase of sources and his/her own contributions, the nature of the author’s conceptual framework and methodology and his/her willingness to impose it. In Boyle’s translation of ‘Aṭṭār, a single Ṣūfī poet speaks for himself; and yet the translator’s own voice is present in the style of translation and the contents of footnote and gloss. Smith seems to rely heavily on quotation and paraphrase, and to intervene as little as possible; but her own voice is nevertheless present in her very reliance; in her general approach, particularly her assumption that to restate is to explain; and in the comparisons that she suggests with other, particularly Christian, mystics. Schimmel relies heavily on quoted material, often wonderfully translated by her, to convey meaning, but is covering much more ground in a much more synthetic way, using individual Ṣūfis as illustrations of stages on the mystic path or elements of the mystical world-view. Although she too appears to keep her own voice to a minimum and the Ṣūfis’ to a maximum, in fact her own personal voice is the most present of the three, as she orients readers to her material and shares her taste with them. One would assume that the more the Ṣūfis speak for themselves, the more the reader can get close to them; ironically, Schimmel’s book is the most evocative of the three. The sections that follow develop these overall impressions case by case and are in turn followed by concluding remarks of a general nature.

An Early Mystic of Baghdad, the oldest of the three works under review, is Margaret Smith’s close study of a key figure in the early development of Ṣūfism, al-Muḥāsibī. She wrote it at a time when many of the printed editions of Islāmic texts that we now take for granted were not yet available. Her absorption in the manuscripts is evident; and like many other Orientalists of her day, and ours, she stays very close to the texts throughout. Her book is organized around various aspects of Muḥāsibī’s life and work: environment and early life, mystical conversion, disciples and associates, works, sources, psychological theory, ascetic theology, moral theology, devotional teaching, mystical teaching, and influence on other

mystics—Muslim, Jewish and Christian. Of particular note is her contention that al-Muḥāsibī paved the way for the work of reconciliation usually attributed to al-Ghazālī.

In her study of Muḥāsibī, Smith says very little explicitly about Ṣūfism in particular or mysticism in general, although the degree to which she identified with the Ṣūfis is evident from early on.³ It helps, however, before discussing this work, to discuss an earlier work, reprinted in 1973 and entitled *An Introduction to the History of Mysticism*. The following quotation taken from it, illustrates explicitly her notion, only implicit in the work under review, that all forms of mysticism are but variations on a fundamental human spiritual urge:

It seems plain that a mystical doctrine found at an early period in the world's history, developing and persisting through the centuries, so that at one and the same time we find it, in almost identical form, in the religions of the East, in the Western Christianity of Germany, France and Italy and in the Byzantine Church of Constantinople, represents a spiritual tendency which is universal, a tendency of the human soul which is eternal.

....

Mysticism, therefore, is not to be regarded as a religion in itself, but rather as the most vital element in all true religions, rising up in revolt against cold formality and religious torpor.⁴

Furthermore, mysticism, as thus generally characterized by Smith, is seen by her to have two components—first, and *foremost*, doctrinal; second, practical: four key articles of faith and three stages on the mystic way.⁵ The kinds of comparison this strategy promotes stress similarity more than difference, and assume that apparent similarities are real ones and significant without regard to context.⁶ Numerous comparisons with Christian mystics and almost none with other Muslim mystics are suggested, a fact that perhaps reflects Smith's own inclinations as well as the state of the field in her day.⁷ Smith's approach is highly anecdotal, and she makes heavy use of stories told by Muḥāsibī's contemporaries and non-contemporaries to explain his thought and behavior, a style common to Islāmīcist scholarship in all areas of intellectual history from the late nineteenth century through at least World War II. What Edward Said has recently identified as a key characteristic of "Orientalism," the talking about Islam exclusively through its

classical texts, abounds here.⁸ Smith's approach, like that of other scholars working at a time of vast expansion of the corpus of texts available to Westerners, strings together paraphrases of and quotes from Muḥāsibī's thought with little overt intervention, trying to give as systematic and rational as possible an account of his teachings, sometimes without regard to their wider cultural context.

Mystical Dimensions of Islam begins with two introductory chapters about the general nature, definition, and historiography of Ṣūfism, and about the history of classical Ṣūfism from its formative period in the seventh century to the beginning of its partial respectability in the twelfth. The rest of the book is organized topically: separate chapters on Ṣūfī practice, psychology, orders, theosophy, poetry, and manifestations in Indo-Pakistan. However, within this topical framework, a thematic approach mixes with history, case study, and phenomenology. Often quotations from specific authors are used as examples of the general themes Schimmel has set. Two appendices follow a short epilogue on recent Ṣūfism: the first on one of Schimmel's special interests—letter symbolism in Ṣūfī literature; the second, on the feminine element in Ṣūfism. The former is particularly fascinating, reinforced as it is by the numerous calligraphic designs interspersed throughout the book.

Schimmel's book is, by her own account, a write-up of her course lecture notes, a response to student demand and a desperate need for books like this, especially for teaching purposes. It does not aim to be comprehensive, nor is it self-conscious about its methodology. Yet it is one of the most comprehensive such books, especially in its appreciation for past scholarship, in its inclusion of popular religion, and in its wide range of examples from different Islāmic language traditions—Urdu, Turkish, Persian, Arabic; and its unstated method of empathy may prove something of a model, especially for writers who wish to give their readers a feeling for this difficult subject. Both of these qualities, comprehensiveness and empathy, are symptomatic of a new trend in Islāmic studies, symbolized by the publication of Hodgson's *Venture of Islam* a year before *Mystical Dimensions*.⁹

Whereas Smith persistently assimilated Ṣūfism to a general schema, Schimmel does so only in the first twenty-two pages of

introductory material, tying Ṣūfism to a few general concepts in comparative religion: dichotomous typologies like Mysticism of Infinity/Mysticism of Personality, voluntaristic and gnostic mysticism, prophetic and mystic; and analogies to stages of the Christian mystical life—via purgativa, via illuminativa, unio mystica, visio beatifica.¹⁰ She then writes the rest of the book largely in terms of Ṣūfism's own thought and symbol world. Comparisons are more often implied than direct.¹¹

Schimmel is, unlike Smith, very careful not to be too quick to attribute influence from outside or inside sources, or to identify Ṣūfism with some universal spiritual urge. Whereas others might like to explain Ṣūfism in terms of origins stimulated by contact with other mystical traditions, Schimmel argues against a glibly derivative explanation and sees a Ṣūfi-like spiritual tendency, particularly as expressed in the tradition of *zuhd*, present in the Qur'ān and in the community of Muḥammad himself. She avoids the simple derivationist argumentation so common in Islāmic studies in part by showing how complex the sources of influence on various Ṣūfi traditions can be. One of her best statements of this sort she makes in connection with the Bektashī *tarīqah*:

In addition to the Shia trend, which is one of the peculiarities of the Bektashi order, Christian influences have been seen in the ritual (which would not be astonishing, in view of the strong Christian substratum in Anatolia). There are, in fact, certain similarities, like penitence or the sacramental meal of bread and wine, but one should not press these similarities too far. The communal meal is much older than the Christian sacrament. In modern, nationalistic Turkish research, a certain "shamanist" aspect of Bektashism has been emphasized; this would connect the order with old Turkish, Central Asian forms of mystical life.

Many trends known from other mystical fraternities can be found in the Bektashiyya as well.¹²

Schimmel's ability to state and handle complexity extends to other matters as well. Her way of handling the connections among Shī'ī, Ṣūfī, and Sunnī values, only just beginning to appear outside of very specialized literature, is particularly refreshing:

It is a well-known fact that many of the Sufis—and many of the pious Sunnites in general—felt a kind of sentimental allegiance to the family of the Prophet without believing in Shia doctrine. The veneration of 'Alī was widespread among the Muslims, and he was often regarded as an important link in the spiritual chain leading the Sufi masters back to the Prophet. Widespread, too, was the veneration of the sayyids.... The relationship be-

tween Shia thought as it crystallized in the ninth and tenth centuries and the theories of Sufism that emerged at about the same time has not yet been completely elucidated; but some of the Sufi teachings about the primordial light of Muhammad and the theories of saintship seem to correspond very closely in their hierarchical structure to Shiite theories about the imamate and the gradual initiation of adepts into the deeper realms of faith, into new levels of spiritual interpretation.¹³

Schimmel's awareness of modern manifestations of classical Šūfi themes adds yet another new dimension, as exemplified in her description of contemporary poetic treatment of the figure of Hallāj.¹⁴ Her ability to distinguish sensualism from eroticism in Persian mystical poetry is also novel.

Schimmel is unconventional and even revisionist in other ways as well. By adding a phenomenological to a historical approach, she is able to dwell on essential structural features of Šūfism, like the *pīr-murīd* relationship; to engage in analysis of symbols in a very promising way; or to incorporate popular Šūfism where scholars like Smith were limited to high culture texts—to emphasize practice where Smith would have stressed doctrine. Her treatment of Šūfi ultra-legalism and ultra-ritualism is a good corrective to their generally antinomian image.¹⁵

In other ways, she is non-revisionist and accepting of received wisdom, for example, that the Umayyads really were "bad Muslims," that Persian/Zoroastrian influence began with the move of the capital to Baghdad, or that the Sharī'ah law fossilized after the late tenth century.¹⁶ In fact, Schimmel's sentiments about *sharī'ah*-mindedness are very close to Smith's; that is, she along with the Šūfis themselves, sees legalism as stifling and Šūfism as a natural desirable reaction to it:

Although Islamic law was never codified, the classical handbooks, along with their commentaries and scholia, were handed down verbatim through the generations—and the Sufis have often raised their voices against the spiritless legalism that stifled free development of the personal spiritual life.¹⁷

More than any other single work on Šūfism, Schimmel's gives the reader an emotional appreciation of Šūfism, forming the reader's tastes and reactions by use of words like unforgettable, remarkable, glittering, radiant, glorious, and charming, when introducing Šūfi materials; and by personalizing and enlivening the discussion of the classical texts with personal experiences.¹⁸ Her

highly emotive and evocative approach works best with the lyrical Şūfī poetry she so well translates, introduces, and glosses. Sometimes she identifies so well that it is difficult to tell where her own voice leaves off and another begins, for example, in the statement,

The equation of *faqr* [poverty] with annihilation, and the emphasis on the negative, nonexistent aspect of things is expressed, in Islamic art, by the large empty hall of the mosque, which inspires the visitor with numinous grandeur. It is also reflected in the negative space in the arabesques or in calligraphy. Only by absolute *faqr* can the created world become a vessel for the manifestation of God, the eternally rich.¹⁹

The fact that Schimmel's book originated in teaching notes combines with the fact that it is a rather personal book to produce frequently what appear to be extraordinarily sweeping generalizations and unfootnoted assertions, which, despite the author's awe- and trust-inspiring erudition, are unsettling, juxtaposed as they are to her painstaking scholarship: "The Şūfīs have interpreted the meaning of the *ṣalāt* differently. Most of them would probably agree with Najmuddin Kubrā's definition...."; "Most of the great writers of Iran and Indo-Pakistan have composed such praise hymns...."; "It is well known how strongly the Arabs respond to sound and the rhythmical wording of a sentence."²⁰

In sum, it is the empathetic, thematic, phenomenological, structural approach, despite its drawbacks, that constitutes the greatest departure in Schimmel's work. Itself not self-consciously comparative, it provides material on which to base a comparative methodology. But in such work, the construction of categories and standards of comparability will be crucial, and scholars will need to work theirs out in collaboration with each other. Schimmel seems to reduce many different examples, from different times and places, to shared fundamentals, as did Smith in *An Introduction to the History of Mysticism*; and in fact, Schimmel's fundamentals are not all that different from Smith's. But we must remind ourselves, as has Staal, that such works deal with superstructures, not with mystical experience itself; as Staal also points out, even similar mystical experiences brought on by similar techniques and methods, expressed in similar verbal formulae, may have quite different impacts on different personalities existing in different cultural contexts and possessing thereby different expectations.²¹ The problematic of this

and all comparative studies is that things can be compared, even found to be similar, without being *comparable*. And unconscious comparisons can often be the most misleading. Comparison by alignment or association, as in Smith and Schimmel, may imply a comparability that does not in fact exist. The study of Šūfism needs now to develop standards of comparability and refine its categories of comparison, all with an eye to their utility to all comparativists of religion.

The *Ilāhī-nāma* is one of Farīd al-Dīn ‘Aṭṭār’s (ca. 1119-1200) epic poems, a praise of renunciation of the material world that tells “... the story of a king whose six sons wish to possess six wonderful things connected with worldly power and pleasure. The king tells each of them stories relevant to their respective wishes, always ending with the information that this goal is not worth striving for.”²² It consists of an exordium, twenty-two “discourses,” and an epilogue, and is translated by Boyle in a fairly literal manner with little attempt at poeticization. Figures of speech and wordplays are indicated here and there. The text’s stature as a Persian classic is attested by its inclusion in the Persian Heritage Series.

After reading Schimmel, who makes Šūfī texts seem so accessible, reading the Boyle translation of a major Šūfī text in toto is something of a shock. Here is a specimen of a type of Šūfī poetic literature—didactic, moralizing, aphoristic, allegorical—that is mentioned by Schimmel but not analyzed in detail by her. It is less universalistically “mystical” than Smith’s or Schimmel’s favored sources and reminds one how culturally particular and inaccessible Šūfī literature can be. Compounded by an enormous intertextuality which even Boyle’s ambitious glossing and footnoting activity cannot encompass (e.g., Boyle has not found the source of a story about the caliph ‘Uthmān’s canker, though it appears in Ṭabarī’s account of the events leading up to ‘Uthmān’s assassination²³), the *Ilāhī-nāma* contains elements, at the level of both image and substance, which require an understanding of the Iranian context—a richness of figures from Firdawsi’s *Shāhnāma* and beyond, especially the overwhelming use of the Ghaznavid period Maḥmūd-Ayāz relationship as iconic; the frequency of blood as a symbol, as in “crying blood” for sorrow; an idiosyncratic version of Hallāj and his end; a surprising concern with intercommunal relations and

tensions; and a view of non-Muslims as comparable with non-Şūfī Muslims.²⁴

Yet the text also contains elements which according to Smith and Schimmel seems to occur as common denominators in Şūfism in particular and sometimes even mysticism in general: an antinomianism which can involve softening of the Law; a definition of real faith which defies common wisdom—the famous example of Iblīs as symbol of true faith, the uncovering of extremes of *shirk* (associationism) that no ordinarily pious individual would perceive; the fighting of attachment to the material world; funny twists on the nature of true gratitude; story patterns recognizable in other traditions and literatures.²⁵

The *Ilāhī-nāma* also reminds us of a persistent problem that each of these three works partially addresses: the relationship between Şūfī literature and other types of literature, between Şūfī ideals and general values. It thus raises the whole question again of how separate Şūfism is, and how pervasive. At this stage we still do not know, as Schimmel says in her introduction, whether it is a something and what kind of something it is—whether it is part of recognizably distinct primal, universal spiritual urge (Smith), a dimension of religious traditions (Schimmel), or a particularly high concentration of a spirituality which pervades whole cultures.²⁶

This review of these three works has raised other general questions, too. How important should an author's identification with and appreciation of Şūfism be to his/her authorial voice? How much should the mystics speak for themselves and how much help do they need to evoke feelings? Is evocativeness itself desirable? As Staal asks, what is the relationship between mystical experience and mystical "superstructures;" and must mystical experience be studied separate from them, as part of "... the more general problem of the nature of the mind."?²⁷ How separate is Şūfism from the general spirituality of the cultures in which it is found? And how much can the study of Şūfism be aligned with the study of other mysticisms so that it can benefit from, and contribute to, the concepts and methods of comparative religion in general?

The fact that these questions can now be generated is an indication of how far Šūfī studies have come. When they begin to be answered, Šūfī studies will have reached yet another plateau.

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* Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār (tr. John Andrew Boyle), *The Ilāhī-Nāma or Book of God* (Manchester University Press, 1976), xxii + 392 pp., £ 9.95.

Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (The University of North Carolina Press, 1975, ³1978), xxi + 506 pp., \$17.00

Margaret Smith, *An Early Mystic of Baghdad; A Study of the Life and Teaching of Ḥārith b. Asad al-Muḥāsibī A.D. 781-857* (London: Sheldon Press, 1977; first printed in 1935), xi + 311 pp., £6.50.

¹ Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār (tr. John Andrew Boyle), *The Ilāhī-Nāma or Book of God* (Manchester University Press, 1976), p. 337.

² Frits Staal, *Exploring Mysticism; a Methodological Essay* (University of California Press, 1975), p. 31.

³ Margaret Smith, *An Early Mystic of Baghdad* (London: Sheldon Press, 1977; first printed in 1935), e.g., p. 14.

⁴ Margaret Smith, *An Introduction to the History of Mysticism* (Amsterdam: Philo Press, 1973; first printed in 1930), pp. 2-3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-8.

⁶ Cf. discussion of comparability, *infra* pp. 8-9.

⁷ Smith, *Early Mystic*, e.g., pp. 238 and 234.

⁸ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978), *passim*.

⁹ Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam; Conscience and History in a World Civilization* (University of Chicago Press, 1974), 3 vols.

¹⁰ Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (The University of North Carolina Press, 1975, ³1978), pp. 5, 6, 7, and 4, respectively.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, e.g., pp. 174 and 262.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 340. See also, p. 318 on Neoplatonic influences on Rūmī.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 82-3. Specialized literature has suggested such, but it has had little impact on more general literature. For example, see Marshall G. S. Hodgson, "How did the early Shīʿa Become Sectarian?," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 75 (1955), pp. 1-13; J. Molé, "Les Kubrawiya entre Sunnisme et Shiisme aux huitième et neuvième siècles de l'Hégire," *Revue des études islamiques* (1961), pp. 162-142.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

¹⁵ On analysis of symbols, see *ibid.*, p. 113; on ultra-legalism, p. 106.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 29, 33, and 32 respectively. For a revisionist analysis of Umayyad religiosity, see Hodgson, *Venture*, I, 251; for material on Persian influence already in the Marwānīd period, see H. A. R. Gibb, "The Social Significance of the Shuubiya," in *Studies on the Civilization of Islam* (ed. by Stanford Shaw and William R. Polk; Boston: Beacon Press, 1962), pp. 62-73.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 32.

¹⁸ E.g., *ibid.*, pp. 137 and 337.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 123.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 152, 163, and 180, respectively. See also pp. 156, 159, 160, and 213 for examples.

²¹ Staal, *Exploring Mysticism*, p. 169.

²² Annemarie Schimmel, "Foreword," in 'Aṭṭār, *Ilāhī-Nāma*, p. xiii.

²³ 'Aṭṭār, *Ilāhī-Nāma*, p. 24 and p. 360 n. 174. There are many places where glosses are still needed, e.g., pp. 69, 100, 219, 227, 223, 232, 235, 239, 309, especially for phrases like "moon-faced" and "world-illuminating." Boyle's glosses are, moreover, almost entirely literary and historical, not substantive readings of allegory, parable, and teaching.

²⁴ Blood, e.g., *ibid.*, pp. 139-40 and especially Discourse XXI, *passim*; Hallāj, p. 103; intercommunal relations, pp. 92 and 263.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 59 (Law); 125, 127, especially 131, 165 (Iblīs); 185 (*shirk*); 163 (attachment); 197-8 (gratitude), Discourse XXI (similarity to *Romeo and Juliet*); and 240 (similarity to life of the Buddha).

²⁶ Marilyn R. Waldman, "Šūfī Themes in a non-Šūfī Text," unpublished paper presented at the American Academy of Religion, New York, November, 1979. It is clear that many of the values and attitudes that Schimmel identifies as Šūfī and that appear in *Ilāhī-Nāma* also appear, in diluted forms, in non-Šūfī texts like the Ghaznavid-period *Ta'rikh-i Bayhaqī*.

²⁷ Staal, *Exploring Mysticism*, p. 169.

ISLAM GUESSED AND OBSERVED

(*Review article*)

R. J. ZWI WERBLOWSKY

Immediately on its publication, *Hagarism*¹ created a splash. It is, indeed, one of the most brilliant, most erudite and most utterly wrongheaded works of scholarship. Witness to the originality of the authors are the 151 pp. of text (pt. I five chapters; pt. II two chapters; pt. III seven chapters) including two appendices; witness to their erudition are the 83 pp. of notes. Actually the book falls into two parts: part one—as brilliant as it is unconvincing—and parts two and three which, whilst generally unconvincing too at least raise a host of new problems or old problems in a new light. And on the day of judgment scholarly works will be judged not by the answers they give but by the questions they stimulate.

Problems of substance and methodology merge as one reads the book. On the one hand Islam is the only civilisation “in the world which went through its formation period later than the first millenium B. C.” (p. vii) and yet much is obscure. The Islamic traditions on which scholarship (and not only Muslim orthodoxy) has relied are problematic, tendentious and often later than they purport to be. Hence the authors unabashedly “set out with a certain recklessness”, including excessive reliance on outside sources, Jewish and Christian (e.g. a 7th cent. Armenian Chronicle or a mid-8th cent. Jewish apocalypse). The authors make use of figures of speech which leave the reader in doubt whether these are helpful metaphors or obfuscating sleights-of-hand (such as “Muslim Talmud”, “Muslim Rabbis” i.e. the ‘ulama, “Sadducee Islam” i.e. the Shi’a, “ghetto” and “enlightenment” periods i.e. the Umayyads and Abbassids respectively etc.), as a result of which the origin of Islam is depicted as a sectarian Jewish messianic movement. To explain the modes of the spread of early Islam in the Fertile Crescent, evidence is marshalled from Syria (where the hellenistic heritage was filtered into Islam), from the “Samaritan Calques”, and from the Babylonian background, which is as

learned as it is fanciful and freakish. But the manner of posing problems anew or for the first time cannot but evoke gratitude (e.g. the encounter of Islam with other civilisations in all their ethnic, cultural and geographical varieties) even as ever so many major problems—too many to be listed here—seem to be inexplicably ignored.

Perhaps the greatest debt of gratitude we owe to the authors is for the courage (the aforementioned “recklessness”) with which they proceed. They evidently refuse to be terrorised and bulldozed into fear and trembling by the increasingly aggressive and vocal chorus (in which western educated self-appointed “Third World” spokesmen like to wield the conductor’s baton—Edward Said’s *Orientalism* being a particularly blatant example) accusing western oriental scholarship of being an expression or even tool of western imperialism. Many western scholars are leaning over backwards to join this chorus, exhibiting a mentality that is best described as a contemporary version of neo-flagellantism. The West has known periods galore of fanatical penitential flagellantism and that’s a subject for historians of religion. The historian of culture will one day have to study the resurgence of its academic counterpart: 20th century orientalist neo-flagellantism. The fact that the authors of *Hagarism* have not fallen prey to this disease is in itself deserving of the highest praise.

Once Islam—no matter what and how its origins and initial crystallisation—had become a “going concern”, it continued to expand and spread across barriers of climate and cultures throughout Asia and Africa. It was a conquest not *ferro ignique* but by methods the understanding of which requires the study of maritime history, commerce and economic geography as well as of local chronicles and myths (and their literary analysis). There is not only the distinction between conversion through military conquest and conversion as a social and political process, but even the latter requires further discrimination between penetration into “high cultures” on the one hand and into illiterate societies on the other. What was the role of traders, saints, sufis, literate agents (even if only as peddlers of amulets), of courts and rulers as distinct from the simple people, of revival movements and political motivations? Iran, Anatolia, Indonesia, China, East and West Africa—what do they teach us not

only about Islam but about the individual and social dimensions of the process of conversion (including the conversion of whole cultures)? The thirteen chapters of *Conversion to Islam*² are a mine of information, careful research and sound and balanced judgment. The editor has contributed a most valuable opening chapter "Toward a Comparative Study of Islamization" and, at the end, a useful "Selected Bibliography."

Revivalism and Messianism are, as historians of religion know, two very different things, although often they coalesce and merge. Mahdism represents such a merger phenomenon, and the Sudanese Mahdia at the end of the 19th century is rightly considered as one of the most spectacular examples. In a series entitled "Studies in Islamic Culture and History", edited from the Shiloah Centre for Middle Eastern and African Studies at Tel-Aviv University, Prof. Haim Shaked has now published *The Life of the Sudanese Mahdi*.³ The study is basically a critical version, or rather condensed paraphrase, in English, of the *sira* of the Mahdi i.e., of Isma'il b. Abd al-Qadir's "The book of the bliss of him who seeks guidance by the life of the Imam the Mahdi". Dr. Shaked enriches his text with a valuable introduction concerning the historical setting and with a biographical sketch of the author as well as with an analysis of the content and composition of the *sira*. Appendices include reproductions of the original Arabic mss. and other source material. These are preceded by a concluding chapter in which Dr. Shaked judiciously examines the text's presentation of the Turks, of the Mahdi and of the Khalifa Abdallahi, and in conclusion shows how this religious-hagiographic-didactic work also serves as a historical source. The book is surely of interest to students of the history of the Sudan; it should be of even greater interest to students of millenarian movements, especially in their form of combined religious revival and military revolt.

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¹ Crone, Patricia and Cooke, Michael, *HAGARISM: The Making of the Islamic World*, Cambridge University Press, 1977, pp. ix + 268, £7.50.

² Levtzion N., ed., *Conversion to Islam*, Holmes & Meier Publ. Inc., New York and London, 1979, pp. vii + 272.

³ Shaked H., *The Life of the Sudanese Mahdi*, Transaction Books, New Brunswick, N. J., pp. xv + 280.

SKILFUL MEANS AS A "GERMINATIVE PRINCIPLE"

*Some remarks on a concept in Mahayana Buddhism**

(Review article)

J. H. KAMSTRA

Many books have been written on nirvana, bodhisattva, and emptiness. So these topics can be assumed to be central to Buddhism. It is not so easy however to find in the west books or articles on 'skilful means'. For all that Pye is quite sure of the fact that upāya or 'skilful means' also should be included into these major concepts of Buddhism: 'the method of thought and practice summed up by the concept of skilful means is one of the fundamental principles of Buddhism as a working religion' (p. 1). Statements like this one occur in his book time and over again. The quality of this 'fundamental principle' is specified by him on the last pages and in the last footnote of his book (p. 164). There he refers to skilful means in Buddhism being an *actif* principle which allows in Buddhism all kinds of shifts of meaning or in other words 'a hermeneutical control' (p. 160). By stating this he just brings the topic of this book in line with some topics of his former publications. So not before long in his 'The Cardinal Meaning'¹ he defined an essence in religious hermeneutics or a 'germinative principle' as: 'an entity with an inner living flexibility and a productive power for new creation and assimilation'. In his new book he has no doubt at all that 'skilful means' is such a germinative principle. Although I am not so sure about this last statement of Pye, I have to acknowledge the enormous value of this book in which the author with a painstaking accuracy mapped out the use of 'skilful means' in the most important sutras of Mahayana Buddhism, i.e. the Buddhism as far as it appears in these sutras. For the understanding of this Buddhism this work is indispensable without any doubt. The connection of 'skilful means' with germinative principle however seems to me to be a little bit premature. There will be a great lot of further research needed before this connection satisfactorily can be

established. But before discussing this let me first have a look at Pye's book.

Pye's new book consists of 9 chapters, to which 6 appendices, a bibliography, and an index are added. It covers 211 pages. In the first chapter (p. 1-17) the author offers a general introduction in which mainly the concept of 'skilful means' and its overall spectrum of meanings skilfully are elaborated. There are at least two ways to look at 'skilful means' (Sanskrit: *upāya*, Chinese: *fang-pien*, Japanese: *hōben*). In the eyes of the Buddhas and the bodhisattvas it is the totality of salvational means, the efficacy of which depends on the personal qualities of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas who handle it. Because of its intimate relations with Dharma (= Buddha's Dharma-kaya) skilful means in this sense is beyond human imagination and beyond human capacities. One is inclined to compare it (although Pye does not do so) with the sacraments of the Christian churches. The theological theories concerning *ex opere operato* and *ex opere operantis* are from the viewpoint of 'skilful means' also rather fascinating. There is one point of difference however: 'skilful means' can be abandoned and replaced by other skilful means as soon as the ends of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas are attained. Sacraments however cannot be thrown away, although in the course of history many sacramental rituals have been modified and some sacraments even have been rejected by some reformed churches. On the other hand in the eyes and hands of ordinary sentient beings skilful means becomes an inferior vehicle to attain Buddhahood. In the eyes of Buddhist sectarians the meaning of skilful means can turn into just the opposite of what it has been originally in the minds of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas: instead of the utmost appropriate means, leading to salvation, they might be dangerous and misleading tricks leading to hell. See Pye's paradigm of these meanings on p. 17. Pye looks at this last kind of tricky 'skilful means' as if they are post-Buddhist. In my opinion they are to be considered equally Buddhist, for they are qualified as such by solid Chinese and Japanese Buddhist monks and leaders.

After this introductory 1st chapter Pye traces back 'skilful means' in its highest sense in the following chapters. So he refers to it in the teachings (chapter 2, p. 18-36), the stories (chapter 3, p. 37-59), and the mythology (chapter 3, p. 60-83) of the Lotus sutra. In

chapters 5 and 6 he finds similar meanings of 'skilful means' in the Vimalakīrti and the Prajñā-pāramitā sutras (p. 85-101 and p. 102-117 respectively). So Vimalakīrti for instance answers the question about the descent of his parents as follows:

'Perfection of insight is the bodhisattva's mother,
And skilful means, we may say, is the father;
Of all the leaders of the multitudes
There is not one who is not born from these' (p. 90).

So far skilful means seems to be a very important principle indeed in handling several means for the sake of nirvana and for the attainment of the highest by Buddhas and bodhisattvas. All this however seems to apply to some Mahayana sutras only, i.e. to Mahayana Buddhism prior to its arrival in China. Even in pre-Mahayana Buddhism (chapter 7, p. 118-137) the term 'skilful means' in its specific highest meaning was not in use yet. Pye seems to suggest that 'skilful means' was at work subconsciously just by controlling the correlation between Buddhism and other thought systems (p. 126). I agree with Pye's remark that 'one should not restrict attention to the unsophisticated village beliefs in spirits and so on, which anthropologists find particularly interesting' (p. 129). But these beliefs should not be excluded either! Mahayana Buddhism without the intimate communication with these local beliefs exists exclusively in the books and minds of some western buddhologists. This exclusive kind of Mahayana Buddhism does not exist at all in the minds of Chinese and Japanese Buddhists! Even in European folk-religion there always has been a close connection and even a mutual acceptance between Christian and pre-Christian 'pagan' beliefs.² Was here some christian or 'pagan' type of 'skilful means' at work? Or do we have to consider skilful means as the sacrament of people with unsophisticated beliefs? In my opinion in European folk-religion the same matrix is at work as in pre-Mahayana-Buddhism. It is this matrix which still can be recovered by cultural anthropologists in European folk religion as well as in Japanese religion. It is this unconscious human mechanism which causes 'syncretism' rather than any other Buddhist or East-Asian conscious principle!

The meaning of the term *hōben* (= skilful means) in modern Japanese is one of the topics of the 8th chapter (p. 138-158). The modern phrase '*uso mo hōben*', even a lie is skilful means, quoted in many modern Japanese dictionaries, is, according to Pye, for articulate Buddhists not something to be happy about (p. 139). I think that these Buddhists do not care about this expression, for the term has been devised and is always been used by most of the Buddhists themselves. Pye gives in this chapter an overall picture of the use of the term *hōben*. In many dictionaries this word seems to have become fully profanized. Some dictionaries do not even mention the original Buddhist meaning of *hōben*. As to the process of profanization of this word in modern Japanese the comparison of the meanings of this word in several editions of one and the same dictionary would have been very instructive. In Pye's edition of *Jikai*, which dates back to 1968, both a Buddhist and a profanized meaning of *hōben* is given (p. 145). In my edition of *Jikai* however (dating back to 1956) the Buddhist explanation is much larger and even contains a quotation of a Buddhist text, the general meaning of *hōben* however is only limited to: measure, special measure.³ After having quoted Niwano Nikkyo, Kumoi Shōzen and Sawada Kenshō Pye arrives at the conclusion that the tenor of twentieth century Mahayanist views looks at the whole of Buddhism as a working religion as being skilful means (p. 151). This conclusion seems to me rather questionable. It cannot be drawn from these quotations and seems to be dictated by Pye's wishful thinking about 'skilful means' as a germinative principle. In sectarian Buddhism namely, which is the only type of Mahayana-Buddhism which exists nowadays in Japan and always has been so since Buddhism came to Japan, the sects which considered themselves to be superior to other sects, called the salvational means of the inferior sects contemptuously *hōben*. Pye proves this himself in his seven pages covering section about sectarian Buddhism (p. 151-158). The ideas of Japanese sectarian Buddhism are utmost important. There is nothing else that Japanese Buddhism has to offer to us. Therefore the historical development of the idea of *hōben* in one or more Japanese Buddhist sects should have covered many chapters of Pye's book instead of a little section of one chapter. It is regretful that this is not the case. Apart from folk-Buddhism in China and

Japan there never has been another type of Buddhism than sectarian Buddhism. The importance of the sutras, which Pye examined on the use of 'skilful means', depends wholly on their place in the life of millions of believers in sectarian Buddhism. Strangely enough in Japanese Buddhist sects *hōben* does not appear at all as a germinative principle. In the Tendai sect for instance Pye is right in stating that quite other lines of thought basically gave impulses to the further developments of its Buddhism. Pye correctly sees these lines in the p'an chiao (= *kyōhan*) system, which critically classifies the doctrines and sutras of Buddhism, and the arrangement of the Lotus sutra into several sections (p. 153). It is a pity that Pye did not analyse in detail the p'an chiao systems. As classifications of the salvational means of Buddhism these systems rather clarify the sectarian attitudes towards 'skilful means'. Very often it is in the p'an chiao systems that the salvational means of other (inferior) sects are disqualified as *hōben*. This tendency is not only limited to Soto-and Shinshu believers. Pye states the sectarian dialectics of *hōben* clearly: 'its fundamental meaning as once given in the major Mahayana sutra tends to be overshadowed by the sectarian influences' (p. 158). Pye relates these dialectics to Buddhist principles. To my mind these dialectics have nothing whatsoever to do with Buddhism or its principles 'from within', but with the East-Asian character of Buddhism.

It is the historical analysis of the term 'skilful means', which is lacking too much in Pye's work, which perhaps might shed some light on the problem of this dialectical shift in meanings of skilful means. This lack of historical consciousness in the treatment of sectarian Buddhism, together with the unhistorical treatment of the term in the Japanese language and the proclamation of skilful means as the essence of Buddhism as a changing religion—in spite of the fact that this term in its highest sense only has been used by Mahayana Buddhism in *sensu stricto*, i.e. in some Buddhist writings of almost 2000 years ago—labels this work to be as essentialistic as the works which Pye himself criticizes for their essentialism in his contribution to 'The Cardinal Meaning'.⁴

Before enouncing 'skilful means' to be a 'germinative principle' of Buddhism the historical development of the term in Chinese and Japanese Buddhism seriously should have been taken into con-

sideration and many historical questions should have been answered first. Some of these questions are: what happened after the Sanskrit term *upāya* had been translated into Chinese for the first time? What was the attitude of the Chinese monks and laymen towards Buddhism and its sutras in that time? I am sure that quite a bit of Chinese intolerance came to play its role in Chinese Buddhism at the same time when Kumārajīva made his famous translations of the Lotus and other sutras. So it was not the Buddhist tendency towards syncretism but it were several Chinese trends of intolerance which contributed as much to the shifts of meaning in 'skilful means' as they did to the origin and growth of a great number of p'an chao systems.⁵ The p'an chao systems for instance became modified as soon as new situations asked for a reformulation of their intolerant attitudes towards other sects. So the Tendai sect of Japan enlarged its kyōhan (= p'an chiao) system under the thread of the Shingon sect during the ninth century. In our times the Sokagakkai changed its kyōhan at least twice in twenty years under influence of the decrease of Christian influence and the growing competition of other Japanese religions and sects.⁶ The first p'an chiao system in which 'skilful means' has been devalued into a second class means of salvation does not date back to the times of Nichiren, the Japanese Buddhist symbol par excellence of intolerance (13th. century, p. 154), but to the Chinese Liang period (502-556), when Pao Liang in his p'an chiao scheme opposed three inferior doctrines, which he had qualified as 'skilful means' (fang-pien), to the harmonious and eternal doctrines of the Mahāparinirvāna sutra.⁷ In my opinion this devaluation of 'skilful means' dates back even further to the discussions about the superiority of instantaneous illumination (in which 'skilful means' had become superfluous) over gradual enlightenment (which was considered to be an achievement of barbarian Indians) in the days of Tao-sheng (360-432), one of the disciples of Kumārajīva.⁸ In choosing for instantaneous illumination Tao-sheng made a choice for Confucius rather than for Buddha.⁹ In doing so he had been guided by his own Chinese feelings rather than by some Buddhist principle.

In the 'General Observations' of his last chapter (p. 159-164) Pye stresses the importance of 'skilful means' as an intrinsic Buddhist

principle, which is capable of 'the provisional articulation and eventual dismantling of religious meanings' and operates therefore as 'a hermeneutical control for Buddhists'. The provisional articulation and eventual dismantling of meanings in Chinese and Japanese Buddhism however did not originate from within but from outside. History is there in order to prove this. In the 4th and 5th centuries it were Confucianism and Taoism, which shaped the Chinese forms of Buddhism and even dismantled and degraded 'skilful means' itself. Even if I would accept the entity of a 'germinative principle', neither many historical facts nor the original meaning of 'skilful means' in the sutras, which Pye examined himself, allow me to see in 'skilful means' such a principle. There always has been and there still is a big gap between these genuinely Buddhist sutras and the syncretistic minds of the Chinese and the Japanese who read them. I quite agree with Hurvitz' remarks on this point: 'The Chinese Buddhist was like the American Bible Protestant: he knew that the Scriptures had been translated into his native tongue from foreign languages, but the text was rendered into Chinese, he read it and treated exactly as he would do a Chinese secular classic, commenting on each character and allowing his fancy to roam without ever a thought of the original from which the Chinese text had been translated'.¹⁰

Summarizing I would like to point out that Michael Pye did a pioneer job in clarifying the term 'skilful means' in Mahayana Buddhism. He did so with painstaking accuracy particularly in the chapters 2-6, and in the appendices A-F, which offer further historiographical and textual details about skilful means in the Mahayana sutras mentioned earlier and in the *Śūraṅgamasamādhi Sutra*. Here lies the great and long-lasting value of Pye's book. It will be hard for any scholar to surpass these pages.

Concerning the chapters 8 and 9 I hope Pye to find the time to trace back the use of 'skilful means' in the history of some Japanese sects before coming to a new principle or a set of principles in Buddhism which can be considered to be responsible for the open and syncretistic nature of East-Asian Buddhism. Those principles can be thought of only as being situational, provisional and historical,

for a historian of religion as such is not supposed to be engaged in essences of religion!

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* Apropos of: Michael Pye, *Skilful Means*, A Concept in Mahayana Buddhism, London, Duckworth, 1978, 211 p.

¹ Michael Pye, Comparative Hermeneutics in Religion, in: M. Pye, R. Morgan, *The Cardinal Meaning*, The Hague 1973, p. 15.

² See my article: De Godsdienst van het Gewone Volk, een moeilijke keuze (The Religion of Ordinary People, a difficult choice), in: *Tijdschrift voor Theologie*, 20 (1980), p. 253-279.

³ Jikai, Tokyo 1956, p. 838.

⁴ Pye, 1973, p. 18ff. Even Pye's 'germinative principle' as a concoction of the theories of Troeltsch, Harnack and Loisy is rather essentialistic and can therefore play a part in philosophy of religion only.

⁵ See J. H. Kamstra, Tolerant en Intolerant Boeddhisme, in: *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 32 (1978), p. 101ff.

⁶ See Kamstra, 1978, p. 104 and 105.

⁷ See Ito Giken, Tendai izen no hankyōsetsu ni tsuite, in: *Ryukoku Daigaku ronsō*, No. 284 (1929), pp. 76, 77.

⁸ Kamstra, 1978, 103.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ See: Leon Hurvitz, Chih-I, in: *Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques*, 12 (1962), p. 61.

THE GNOSTIC TEMPTATION

(Review article)

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It demands a rare combination of skills on the part of the historian to introduce a broad public to a field of current research. All the more so when this field may well be called "esoteric" in various senses of the word: the elucidation of doctrines which were already strange and secret in the distant past, then fell into oblivion, and were preserved in an obscure language, usually lies far from the layman's common interest.

In her recent work on *The Gnostic Gospels*¹ Professor Elaine Pagels of Barnard College indubitably shows great gifts for *vulgarisation scientifique*. The book—major portions of which also appeared in a series of articles in the *New York Review of Books*—won in 1979 the American National Book Award. Together with this honor, however, Pagels' publication has brought her harsh criticism on the part of some distinguished colleagues, who have accused her (in one way or another) of disguised sensationalism. Unfortunately this polemic has sometimes taken an acrimonious tone which her thought-provoking book hardly deserves. Indeed *The Gnostic Gospels*, though in popular form, propounds some bold theses and suggests a new approach to problems which lie at the core of Gnostic scholarship today. These theses add much to the value of the book. As we shall see, however, they also raise some basic questions for the historian of religion.

First of all, it is to Pagels' credit that she has presented us with a sustained attempt to give a sociological description of Gnosticism, or rather of those Gnostic trends which present close contacts with nascent and emerging Christianity. The nature and the paucity of the sources render such a task—the urgency of which was already underlined by the Messina international conference in 1966²—extremely difficult. With great sensitivity Pagels, who describes her work as having grown "out of research into the relation between

politics and religion in the origins of Christianity" (p. ix), succeeds in unveiling sociological conditions or political attitudes implicit in theological conceptions of the "Gnostic Christians" (or "some of them"—Pagels does not always make it sufficiently clear which trends exactly she is referring to). These conditions and attitudes, according to her, implied a rejection of the institutions which early "orthodox" Christianity was in the process of developing in the second century.

Pagels adds—and this is probably the major thesis of the book—that this unveiling of social or political (i.e. "church-political") attitudes is essential for a proper understanding of the Patristic anti-Gnostic polemics. In order to do so, she analyzes the implications of various issues upon which the Gnostics (mainly the Valentinians) opposed the Church Fathers. She thus deals with such issues as docetic attitudes toward the passion (and thus, *ipso facto*, the resurrection) of Christ, corresponding attitudes toward martyrdom, the idea of a church of the "elect" finding the way to God through self-knowledge, and therefore their rejection of ecclesiastical (and in particular episcopal) authority, or their description of the Divine Realm in terms of sexual roles with the related "liberated" attitude toward women.

Although Pagels' arguments do not always carry conviction to the same degree, it is difficult to question the existence of a correlation between theological views and sociological attitudes, and the point she makes here should indeed be pondered by scholars. The way in which Pagels argues her main thesis, however, implies much more than such a correlation—and it is here that serious reservations need to be expressed. The overall picture which emerges from the book is not simply that of "political implications" of the religious debates between "orthodox" and "gnostic" Christians in the early Church (p. XXXVI). Rather, Pagels' account tends to deny the essential and intrinsic seriousness of these theological debates, and to see them mainly as disguised struggles between divergent social or political conceptions. Moreover, the alleged socio-political divergences occasionally have little or no factual basis. In other words, it would seem that she has much overplayed her hand. Consequently, her description of the relationships between Gnosticism and the early Church is misleading on some

points of major importance. I shall try here briefly to indicate some of them.

Whenever one deals with mutations of any given religious tradition, it is often difficult—but always necessary—to define the borderline between a simple reinterpretation and the creation of a new religion. In this respect, the scholar must recognize the basic difference between a deepened reflection upon the existing fundamental structures of a religion by individuals (or in some cases groups) unsatisfied by the received doctrine, and a radical modification of those very structures. While the former is at the origin of mystical or esoteric trends, the latter transformation must be recognized as establishing essentially new religious structures. Such is the case, for instance, in the transition from Judaism to Christianity. Despite the fact that most of the main Jewish theological conceptions were accepted, or reinterpreted, in the first expressions of Christianity, the mutation of the figure of the Messiah into a divine being was so radical a transformation of the basic structure of Judaism that it meant *ipso facto* the creation of a new religion.

Such is the case, again, in the mutation from Christianity to Manichaeism. Jesus Christ (or rather, various concepts of Jesus and of Christ) indeed played a central role in Mani's thought. But his conception of himself as the Paraclete modified the essential structure of Christianity to such an extent that no scholar would deny that he established a new religion.

Now, Pagels speaks throughout her book of "Gnostic Christians" without ever reflecting upon the propriety of this phraseology. The fact that some Gnostics made much use of Christian elements in their theology should not prevent the scholar from recognizing the fact that Gnosticism succeeded in transcending mere syncretism and in creating a new religious attitude—indeed, a religion *sui generis*. This was recognized long ago, of course, in particular by Hans Jonas, who called his English book on Gnosticism *The Gnostic Religion*.³ Pagels refers to Jonas, but not to his major conclusion. It seems to me that historical research would greatly benefit from a study of Gnosticism in its own right (even of those trends which show closer contact with Christianity), and not only as a "heresy", seductive or not.

Pagels argues that the hierarchical structure of the church is correlative of its strongly monotheistic theology: there is only one bishop, just as there is only one God (p. 47). According to her, the Gnostics' rejection of orthodox monotheistic theology is linked to their rejection of the concept of an ecclesiastical hierarchy, since their religious conceptions were informed by their innate individualism and subjectivism. She fails to mention, however, the strong evidence for the existence of highly hierarchical and centralized churches established on a purely Gnostic theological basis. In the middle of the second century, Marcion established throughout the world a Gnostic church, with bishops, deacons, presbyters, and a strong differentiation between clerics and laymen, as Justin Martyr and Tertullian testify. Moreover, the establishment of the Marcionite Church seems to have given strong impetus to the development of ecclesiastical structures in the Catholic Church.⁴ This Marcionite Church was still in existence in fifth-century Babylonia, where the Marcionites called themselves "Christians" (*naṣoraie*). Similarly, in the third century Mani established, again on purely gnostic principles, a world church whose strong structures permitted his religion to survive for more than a thousand years. These facts argue powerfully against Pagels' thesis. Had she referred to them, her argument would have been not only qualified, but also sharpened. A careful typology of the different "Christian" Gnostic trends might have brought us closer to an understanding of the reasons for which the Valentinians opposed the Catholic bishops.

It may be useful to give some further examples of points of divergence between Catholic Christians and Valentinians, as Pagels analyzes them, and to show that these should rather be seen as stemming from radically different *theological* structures. Despite the increasingly recognized Jewish roots of Gnosticism, it is apparent that the revolt against the Jewish God—which is a fundamental element in the various Gnostic trends—rules out any meaningful use of the term "Jewish Gnosticism".⁵ It should be equally clear that the revolt against the God of Israel is *ipso facto* a revolt against Christianity.

Pagels notes that the Valentinians considered the demiurge to be a lesser divine being, characterized by his ignorance (p. 37). Yet

she refuses to speak of dualism in the case of Valentinian Gnosticism, dualism from which "it differs essentially" (p. 31). There is no dispute on the fact that Valentinus did not have the same conception of God as did Marcion. But whether the historian of religion ever finds dualism *à l'état pur* remains doubtful. Even among the Marcionites or the Manichaeans the good God (and only he can truly be called God) enjoys a clear supremacy over the demiurge, or the evil power.

A taxonomy of dualism would therefore be more in order here than Pagels' simplistic description of the idea of a creator-God, master of the universe, as "popular" (p. 32). Had she attempted such a taxonomy, she would not have been puzzled by the fact that Irenaeus considered what she calls the Valentinian "modification of monotheism" to be "so crucial—in fact, so utterly reprehensible..." (p. 33). The idea that God is almighty, wise and good, and that it is on account of these qualities that he rules the good world which he created, might well have been considered "popular" by some pagan philosophers. But for Christians, as well as for Jews, such a conception was the very basis upon which the whole religion was established. Here again, rather than insisting upon "the very different structure of authority" created by the Gnostic "modification of monotheism" (p. 41) in order to explain the reaction of the Church Fathers, it would be more fruitful to speak about the totally different *theological* structures created by the Gnostic *rejection* of monotheism. Indeed, to require Christians to recognize, in order to be saved, that God is not the creator of the world, was not to demand from them (as Pagels says) a higher "level of understanding" (p. 116), but rather conversion to a new religion.

That the Gnostics indeed revolted against the very foundation of monotheism is made clear by the evidence brought by Pagels herself in her third chapter, "God the Father, God the Mother." She presents some of the feminine descriptions of the Divinity in Gnostic texts, but fails to emphasize that, far from describing God himself, they refer to a divine *consort* (cf. p. 50). Here again, it is difficult to contend that we are still in a monotheistic climate. About various texts which describe the relationships between Sophia and Yaldabaoth, Pagels remarks: "Yet all of these are mythical ex-

planations.” She adds: “Can we find any actual, historical reasons why these gnostic writings were suppressed?”—as if it were not their authors’ use of some Christian elements in the construction of a wild and full-fledged mythology which induced the Church Fathers to recognize that they could in no meaningful sense still claim to be Christians.

According to Pagels, the emergence of feminine figures in Gnostic mythology derives directly from a particular pattern of sexual attitudes which emerged in gnostic circles—and not in orthodox ones. For her, “Gnostic-Christians often take the principle of equality between men and women into the social and political structures of their communities” (p. 66). It seems to me that even a cursory reading of the Nag Hammadi texts should show that Gnostic sexual attitudes are not exactly those about which modern “liberated” women would dream.

The importance of feminine elements in a *mythology* does not in itself imply equal *social* functions for men and women. The psychologist of religion should note, on the contrary, that such active (or hyper-active) roles devoted to women should be seen in the context of the rigorous asceticism that appears to have been the rule in most Gnostic circles, and that both ascetic and libertine practices can derive from an antinomian attitude. On this topic, a particularly lucid analysis was already provided by Clement of Alexandria:

“Accordingly we may divide all the heresies into two groups ... Either they teach that one ought to live on the principle that it is a matter of indifference whether one does right or wrong, or they set a too ascetic tone and proclaim the necessity of continence on the ground of opinions which are godless and arise from hatred of what God has created.”⁶

Pagels sees the rejection of martyrdom, on the part of some Gnostics, as connected with their docetic theology. This rejection, however, is more readily understood as a consequence of the basic mistrust shown by these religious *virtuosi* for any kind of intercourse with “outsiders”; even martyrdom implies, in a way, the attribution of a certain value to the powers who rule this world. The Gnostics, who considered themselves to be the only “elect ones” (in opposition to non-gnostic humanity), developed together with their esoteric doctrines also secret cultic practices. It is these doctrines and these practices which led Tertullian to remark that they were

closer to pagan mysteries than to the apostles' teaching.⁷ Indeed, one of the basic mutations through which nascent Christianity had differentiated itself from Judaism had been its equal offering of salvation to *all* men and women. The Gnostic abandonment of this catholicity was therefore a departure from one of the main elements of Christianity.

As to the docetism characteristic of the Gnostics, it should be seen as directly related to the lack of interest (noted by Pagels) which they showed for "the historical Jesus" (p. 12; cf. p. 15). The phenomenologist can hardly consider as Christian a conception in which the figure of the founder of Christianity, as he appears in the canonical gospels, is not at the core of religious life. It should be noted, moreover, that the docetic attitude of the Gnostics appears to be directly linked to their sexual encratism. The latter, in its turn, is based upon their belief that "birth is something evil"; in Clement's words, again:

"This is the ground upon which Docetism is held by [Julius] Cassianus and by Marcion also, and on which Valentinus indeed teaches that Christ's body was 'psychic'. They say: 'Man became like the beasts when he came to practise sexual intercourse'."⁸

Similarly, the insistence upon a literal understanding of Christ's resurrection, on the part of orthodox Christians, needs no further political explanation, contrary to what Pagels says: it was perceived (see for instance Col. 1:18) as the sign that the resurrection of the dead—which was an essential belief for early Christianity as it was for rabbinic Judaism (and had been for the Pharisees)—would eventually come to pass. As Origen puts it: "Had there been no death of Christ, there would certainly have been no resurrection and there would have been no 'first born from the dead.'"⁹ To sum up, Pagels' argument that Gnostic teaching was "potentially subversive of (orthodox Christian) order" is not radical enough. Indeed, it is of the very foundations of Christianity that Gnosticism was subversive. In this matter scholarship might well, on its own grounds, agree with the Church Fathers.¹⁰

These remarks are not meant to undermine Pagels' valiant attempt to unveil as far as possible the social implications of Gnostic theology and to add to our scant knowledge of the intricate relation-

ships between Christianity and Gnosticism in the first centuries. Rather, they are intended to suggest some lines along which the serious questions raised by the author of *The Gnostic Gospels* may be answered with greater accuracy by further research.

In any case, the book is significant on another account. Manifestly, Pagels' attitude to the Gnostics is highly sympathetic. She laments, for instance, "the impoverishment of Christian tradition" brought about by their rejection (p. 149). She describes as "modern" the "subjectivity" of the Gnostic religious approach, implying that it is in many ways closer to the psychology of contemporary Christians than the views of "orthodoxy". In so doing, she tends to forget her proclaimed role as an objective historian, and is led to launch a theological campaign against "established" Christianity, then and now. In this vein she can argue, against Pope Paul VI's opposition to the ordination of women, that "the Nag Hammadi sources ... challenge us ... to re-evaluate the present situation" (p. 69). *Mutatis mutandis*, Pagels' stand is somewhat reminiscent of Harnack's deeply sympathetic study of Marcion. Harnack, who judged Marcion's attempt to have been premature in the second century, argued that his basic conceptions should in the twentieth at last, be recognized as a deep, nay purified expression of Christianity.

In this sympathy, *The Gnostic Gospels* is symptomatic of an interesting phenomenon observable today, particularly among intellectuals, and which reveals an important feature of the *Zeitgeist*. Professor Harold Bloom of Yale, for instance, has for many years transformed a fascination with the intuitions of the early Gnostics into a remarkable tool for the exegesis of modern English poetry. This fascination has culminated in 1979 with his publication of *The Flight to Lucifer: A Gnostic Novel*. Another example of what I would call the "Gnostic temptation" is the passionate attempt by the French writer Jacques Lacarrière to understand the Gnostics' "plea against the world" and to sympathise with them.¹¹

Such a more or less avowed inclination toward Gnostic views or attitudes can admittedly be detected as an underground stream throughout western intellectual history. Yet it seems that recent years have seen, together with various Eastern fads, a significant resurgence of the seductive appeal of some "uncanny" and "for-

bidden'' sides of Western tradition: the Gnostic temptation, or the Stranger within.

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¹ New York: Random House, 1979.

² See U. Bianchi, ed., *Le Origini dello gnosticismo* (Suppl. to Numen, 12; Leiden: Brill, 1967), XXIX, (documento finale, VI), and in particular the paper of E. Michael Mendelson, "Some Notes on a Sociological Approach to Gnosticism," *ibid.*, pp. 668-675. See also Henry A. Green, "Suggested Sociological Themes in the Study of Gnosticism", *VC* 31 (1977), pp. 169-180, with bibliographical references to previous studies. In his recent full-fledged presentation of Gnosticism, Kurt Rudolph devotes much attention to sociological problems; see *Die Gnosis: Wesen und Geschichte einer spätantiken Religion* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978).

³ *The Gnostic Religion: The Message of the Alien God and the Beginnings of Christianity* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958).

⁴ See A. von Harnack, *Marcion: Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott* (TUGAL 45; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1924), pp. 153ff., and E. C. Blackman, *Marcion and his Influence* (London: SPCK, 1948), pp. 3-4. For Harnack, Marcion's thought was to be radically differentiated from Gnosticism. On various accounts, this view has to be rejected.

⁵ See, for instance, the seminal remarks of both D. Flusser, "Scholem's recent work on Merkabah Literature", *JJS* 11 (1960), 59-68, and H. Jonas, in his "Response to G. Quispel's 'Gnosticism and the New Testament'", in J. P. Hyatt, ed., *The Bible in Modern Scholarship* (London: Carey Kingstate Press, 1966), pp. 279-293.

⁶ *Strom.* III, 40; transl. H. Chadwick, *Alexandrian Christianity* (The Library of Christian Classics: Philadelphia: Westminster Press, n.d.), p. 58.

⁷ *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, 40, 8-9.

⁸ Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* III, 102 (transl. Chadwick, p. 88).

⁹ *Hom. in Numeros* XIV, 2, transl. H. Bettenson, *The Early Christian Fathers*, vol. 1 (Oxford: University Press, 1956), p. 192.

¹⁰ On the fundamental reasons of the conflict between the Church Fathers and the Gnostics, see George W. MacRae, "Why the Church Rejected Gnosticism", in E. P. Sanders, ed., *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, I (London: SCM Press, 1980), pp. 126-133 and 236-238 (notes). MacRae, who rightly remarks at the outset that early Christianity should not be regarded as a monolithic entity, lists non-conformist ethical behaviour, rejection of the Creator God and docetism as being the main tenets of the Gnostic attitude which proved to be incompatible with New Testament and early Patristic theology.

¹¹ *Les Gnostiques* (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), with a preface by Lawrence Durrell, himself the author of a "Gnostic" novel: *Monsieur, or the Prince of Darkness*. (London, Faber & Faber, 1974).

BOOK REVIEWS

GUILLAUMONT, ANTOINE, *Aux origines du monachisme chrétien: Pour une phénoménologie du monachisme*, Spiritualité orientale 30 — F 49720 Bégrolles en Mauge, Editions de l'Abbaye de Bellefontaine, 1979, 241 p.

The series in which this book is published deserves to be better known; together with translations of some of the basic texts of Russian orthodox spirituality, as well as of early and western medieval monasticism, the series' editors have already published some important scholarly works in the field, or reprinted classic studies long out of print.

In this volume, Professor Guillaumont of the Collège de France presents us fourteen studies published since 1967 in various places, not all of them easily available. Many of the studies collected here take their departure from the literary evidence related to the peculiar kind of semi-hermits who flourished in the fourth and fifth centuries in lower Egypt, and particularly in the desert of the "cells" or *kellia*. Guillaumont has in the past contributed much to our knowledge of the spirituality developed by the monks of lower Egypt, both as the editor of Evagrius (the great thinker and theorist of Egyptian monasticism) and as an archeologist (between 1965 and 1969 Guillaumont co-directed a series of digs which unearthed the site of the *kellia*).

Yet what he attempts—and largely succeeds in doing—in most of the articles reprinted here is not so much to retrace the history of early Egyptian monasticism as to throw light upon the realm delimited by the interplay of psychological drives and theological structures, a realm which defines what is traditionally called "spirituality", and in which Christian monasticism has its roots.

Guillaumont's approach is therefore necessarily that of the phenomenologist, and the book's subtitle adequately expresses its intention and content. Although references to non-Christian phenomena are relatively rare, and remain always discreet, Guillaumont is fully aware of the legitimacy of comparisons between the material he deals with and e.g., aspects of Hindu or Buddhist monasticism. In a sense, Guillaumont's sober phenomenology gives some new force of conviction to a method which has too often been plagued by—and sometimes even identified with—*Parallelenfreudigkeit*.

It would take too much space to summarize here the various studies in which Guillaumont analyzes the monks' ambivalent attitudes to the

desert, manual work or mystical visions, or the ascetic value of life in a foreign land. In the phenomenological synthesis which closes the volume (originally published in *Numen* 25 [1978]). Guillaumont sees the core element of monasticism in the *search for unity* (symbolized, as it were, by the word *monachos* itself, or its Syriac equivalent *iḥidayā*), the rejection of any division in one's life and activities. It is from this element, according to him, that other constitutive aspects of monasticism—which he calls “les démarches monastiques fondamentales”—such as celibacy, renunciation and anachoresis, logically evolve.

One of the major aspects of Guillaumont's approach is his insistence upon the fact that although monasticism bursts out as a movement only in the fourth century (and, as contemporary research increasingly recognizes, in Mesopotamia-Syria and in Egypt *at the same time*), its core element is deeply rooted in Christian consciousness and basic attitudes from the first century on. Indeed, Guillaumont's search goes back to the Jewish sources of Christianity themselves and reveals the deep similarities between ascetic aspects of Jewish ethics and the basic religious drive of Christian monasticism in its various forms. The originality of Guillaumont's contribution on this point should be emphasized, and deserves to be pursued in future research. He does not only compare the rule of the Qumran Community, or what Philo says about the Therapeutes (whom Christian legend identified with the first monks), with fourth century coenobitic rules. Taking Aphrahat as a model of archaic Mesopotamian Christianity, he shows how some of the exegetical traditions upon which the asceticism of the Christian “sons of the pact” (*benei qayamā*) was established, are reflected in Hebrew midrashim and in Jewish-Christian ethics. Yet Guillaumont recognizes that there remains a deep chronological hiatus between the last documented Jewish “monastic” group (in the first century) and the first manifestations of Christian monasticism. It is precisely on such occasions—when the plausible historical links between two phenomena fall short of decisive proof—that phenomenology is most convincingly used.

Guillaumont touches on the problem of the relationships between Mesopotamian Christian asceticism, such as that exemplified in the fourth century “Book of Degrees” (*ketabā demaskatā*), and Manichaeism. Both “stem from the same milieu,” in his words, and he inclines to see Manichaeism as having been influenced by Christian asceticism, rather than vice-versa. On this point, as well as on the much-debated problem of the relationships between Christian and Gnostic asceticism, the task of future research will be greatly aided by Guillaumont's learned and sensitive presentation of the main trends of early Christian monasticism.

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ALSTON, A. J., *Śaṅkara on the Absolute*, A Śaṅkara Source - book, I — London, Shanti Sadan, 1980, 259 p. £3.50.

Śaṅkara on the Absolute is the first of a proposed six-volume series on the works of Śaṅkara (ca. 700 a.d.), the foremost exponent of Advaita or “nondualistic” Vedānta, which many Indian philosophers and scholars take to be the most important philosophical (religious) system or tradition in Indian thought. The proposed volumes are divided, according to the author, so as to cover six themes: (1) The Absolute; (2) God and the World; (3) God and the Soul; (4) Polemics; (5) Spiritual Discipline and the rôle of Revelation; and (6) The Spiritual Path Mr. Alston states that the series “aims to bring together the most important texts of Śaṅkara in a systematic and digestible form” and that his work is meant as a “reader” rather than as a “reference work,” with the translations aiming more at readability (without sacrificing content) than at philological exactitude.

Volume I consists of a substantial introduction to Śaṅkara’s life and work, followed by chapters dealing with the doctrine of nescience (*avidyā*), the knowledge of the Absolute (*Brahman*), and the Absolute as being, consciousness and bliss (*saccidānanda*). Each group of texts in the chapters is further introduced with an explication of the main points of Śaṅkara’s thought and the contexts in which particular problems arise.

One problem that every student of Indian philosophy faces immediately is to get hold of the distinctive philosophical teachings of a given system in the primary classical literature. It is a problem because Indian philosophers did not, until much later, write their works as coherent philosophical treatises which are organized thematically and which deal with a set of clearly defined problems and issues; rather the works were written as part of an ongoing tradition (or “text,” in at least one hermeneutical sense of the word), where from initial (usually scriptural) works (*śruti*) of a highly poetic/religious character (for Vedānta, the Upaniṣads and the *Bhagavadgītā*), there developed condensed, and often exceedingly cryptic, summations of a school of thought (*sūtras* and *kārikās*), which in turn were given extensive commentaries (*bhāṣyas*) and sub-commentaries (*ṭīkās*), with many *sūtras* also accorded short commentaries (*vṛttis*) and glosses dealing with particular problems in a *sūtra* or *kārikā* (*vārtīkas*). The commentaries are the main philosophical elaborations on the system as such—and they were organized, quite naturally, according to what they were commenting upon. Further, apart from form, much of the content in the classical commentaries is of marginal philosophical or religious interest, in any strict sense of the terms. They include extended discussions of grammatical points and of how various nonphilosophical

passages of scripture (*śruti*) are to be understood. In short, to get hold of the basic doctrines in the primary classical literature requires much patient digging. Mr. Alston has now done much of that digging for the student of Advaita Vedānta.

Assuredly, something gets lost in any excavation of this sort. Although Mr. Alston in his choice of materials tries to give the reader some feeling for the kind and style of argumentation in the commentarial literature, of necessity, the reader is going to miss the full flavor of the argumentatively lively, yet oftentimes tedious, discussions about the proper interpretation of certain (Upaniṣadic) passages, the right analysis of certain key terms, and so on. Whenever we have “texts” extracted from their “contexts” something gets lost.

But, at the same time, something is gained; especially for the Western student of Indian thought. He can engage the material initially in a familiar way, and—if he is so interested—he can then turn to the texts in their fulness.

Mr. Alston, I think, has made a very substantial contribution. His writing is lucid; he gets to the essence of the major doctrines without undue jargon; he has a keen sensitivity to the philosophical issues and problems in the Indian context; he understands fully how the system functions as both argument and praxis; he is appropriately careful in his scholarship and use of materials; and his own judgments are balanced and wise.

Specialists will probably find his discussion of *māyā* and his efforts to place Vedānta in relation to a wide range of other traditions in India (from the Pāñcarātras to Mādhyamika Buddhism) to be most useful.

Two points, however, should perhaps be noted. First, Alston speaks repeatedly of Śaṅkara as adhering strictly to “a principle of transcendence.” Now in most contexts where Alston states this, it is rather clear what is meant. But it should be emphasized that ‘transcendence’ as most often understood in Western (especially religious) thought usually involves some kind of fundamental dualism (or radical difference in the respective nature of) man and the divine or man and nature and the notion that man must “go beyond” himself to achieve kinship with, or insight into, that other order of being. One of the central notions in Śaṅkara’s thought, which Alston is of course very much aware of, is that Reality is to be realized in the here and now; for, it is said, we are identical with it all the time. Śaṅkara never tires of arguing that nothing “new” is acquired in true knowledge other than the realization of what one really is. This is not “transcendence” in the usual sense of the term.

Second, although Mr. Alston offers a brief and very good discussion of post-Śaṅkara Advaita, he concludes the discussion with a rather curious remark. He says:

And the glance we have taken at developments in his school after his death should be enough to convince us of the need ... for avoiding the temptation to seek light on his views from the writings of his followers after Sureśvara. (p. 55)

It is not clear to me why we need to avoid such a temptation. It would certainly be poor scholarship to read Śaṅkara only in the terms in which his school later developed (into various sub-schools, with their own problems selected for emphasis); but assuredly we can get some considerable help from the developments in post-Śaṅkara Vedānta in our understanding of the philosophical significance of many key concepts; such as “superimposition” and “ignorance.” The technical refinements which were made in the analyses of such concepts do enable us, I believe, to understand better their actual role in Śaṅkara’s own thought.

Mr. Alston’s translations are indeed readable and succeed remarkably well in setting forth Śaṅkara’s philosophical ideas. If this first volume is typical of what is to follow in the series, one can, I think, judge Mr. Alston’s project to be very successful indeed.

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CHRONICLE

Those who had feared that the venue of the XIVth Congress of the IAHR might result in reduced attendance found that they were wrong. About 650 scholars from North and South America, Eastern and Western Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia, including several participants from the People's Republic of China, congregated on the campus of the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg (Canada) during August 17-21. The programme followed the general plan as previously announced (see NUMEN XXVI, 1979, 127-128). Twenty sections, centering around the main theme "Traditions in Contact and Change" covered most of the traditional disciplines as well as the more recent foci of interest in the study of religions. The day-long meetings were preceded every morning by one Plenary Lecture. The usual academic proceedings were supplemented by special symposia-type sessions as well as by a rich social and cultural programme (films and slide-shows, Anjali's [Anne-Marie Gaston's] both learned and artistically superb demonstration of classical Indian dance, exhibits and displays, concerts and excursions). Also the spouses and children of participants were offered special programmes.

The hosts of the Congress i.e., the Canadian Organising Committee and their staff as well as the University of Manitoba, deserve the highest praise for their hard work to ensure the smooth and successful running of the Congress. They also deserve special praise and thanks for presenting participants *before* the opening of the Congress with a volume of Abstracts (pp. 273) of the papers to be read.

There may have been some lack of symmetry between the various sections, but the reason for this imbalance was a happy one: the IAHR Congress was held in conjunction with the Third Annual Conference of IABS (the International Association of Buddhist Studies). Hence the Buddhist section was larger and heavier than usual.

As required by our Statutes, the Congress was also the occasion for transacting IAHR business. The meetings of the Executive Board, International Committee and General Assembly as well as

the Congress as a whole were presided over (in the absence, for reasons of health, of President Marcel Simon) by Vice-President J. M. Kitagawa. Having served with great distinction for two terms as President of the IAHR, Prof. M. Simon retired from this office in accordance with our constitution and a new Executive Board was elected with Prof. Annemarie Schimmel as President. Four new member-groups (Australia, Belgium, Nigeria and Switzerland) and two international scholarly organisations, the International Association of Buddhist Studies and The Mithraic Society, were admitted to viz. affiliated with the IAHR. Altogether the IAHR can look back on an extremely successful and stimulating congress, and look forward to a broadening and deepening of the work which is its goal and *raison d'être*.

At the closing session of the Congress, the thanks of the IAHR, and of the participants from abroad in particular, to the Canadian hosts were eloquently expressed by H.I.H. The Prince Mikasa.

The affiliation to the IAHR of The Mithraic Society, which happily will continue to exist and to hold its conferences and *in situ* workshops in spite of difficulties that have arisen in the recent past, should give the Society some backing. On the other hand the Society has had to cease publication of its *Journal of Mithraic Studies*. Back issues of the Journal (vols. i-iii, 1976-1980) are still available from the publishers, Messrs. Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.

The British Assoc. for the History of Religions held its annual meeting on september 23, 1980, this time at the West London Synagogue, with the Leo Baeck Institute acting as host. Earlier in the year the Proceedings of the XIIIth Congress of the IAHR (Lancaster, 1975) had come out as vol. II of the Leicester Studies in Religion. The volume (*History of Religions*, ed. by Michael Pye and Peter McKenzie, pp. 181 + index, publ. by Leicester Univ. Press, £6.—) contains in summary form papers, addresses and research reports given at the Lancaster Congress, plus the full text of some of the opening and closing addresses. Though not a volume of Proceedings in the *sensus plenior* of the term, the publication nevertheless constitutes a record of the Lancaster Congress.

An account of the 1978 annual meeting of the DVRG was given in the "Chronicle" section of *NUMEN* XXV (1978), p. 283. It is appropriate, therefore, by way of an addendum, to announce that the papers presented on that occasion have now been published in book form: *Leben und Tod in den Religionen: Symbol und Wirklichkeit* (ed. G. Stephenson), Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, 1980, pp. 350 + 26 plates. The variety of approaches and topics (general comparative considerations; European, African, Asian and Amerindian case material; philosophical, artistic, ritual and narrative expressions of the life-and-death theme) render a detailed review of the nineteen chapters of the book practically impossible. But the publication of the volume should not go unnoticed in these pages.

RJZW